

PhD Thesis

**INDIA'S MARITIME STRATEGY:
TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY
CHALLENGES FOR PAKISTAN**



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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to my father who has sacrificed so much for my success and to my mother, who always encouraged me by calling even my failures a success. I would like to thank my beloved parents, whose love, kindness, continuous support and motivations have enabled me to achieve this feat.

DECLARATION

I, Syed Ali Raza Shah Registration No.37-FSS/PHDPS/S21 student of PhD in the subject of Political Science session 2021-2025, hereby declare that the matter printed in the thesis titled: **INDIA'S MARITIME STRATEGY: TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR PAKISTAN**, is my own work and has not been printed, published and submitted as research work, thesis or publication in any form in any University, Research Institution etc. in Pakistan or abroad.

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It is hereby certified that the research work contained in this thesis titled **INDIA’S MARITIME STRATEGY: TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY CHALLENGES FOR PAKISTAN** has been carried out and completed by **Syed Ali Raza Shah** Registration No.37-FSS/PHDPS/S21 under my supervision. The quantum and quality of the work, contained in this thesis, is adequate for the award of degree of Master of Science.

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Syed Ali Raza Shah
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List of Abbreviations

AAGC	Asia Africa Growth Corridor
AEW	Airborne Early warning
AIP	Air Impendent Propulsion
AMD	Air and Missile Defence System
ANP	Awami National Party
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
AShW	Anti-Ship Warfare
ASuW	Anti-Surface warfare
ASW	Anti-Submarine Warfare
ASW-SWC	Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft
BIMSTEC	Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation
BIST-EC	Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation
BJP	Bharatiya Janata Party
BLA	Baluchistan Liberation Army
BLF	Baluchistan Liberation Front
BNA	Baluch Nationalist Army
BSO	Baluchistan Students Organization
CCS	Cabinet Committee on Security
CEZ	Coastal Economic Zones
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIWS	Close in Weapon System
CJCSC	Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee
CMD	Credible Minimum Deterrence
CPEC	China Pakistan Economic Corridor
CSD	Cold Start Doctrine
DAC	Defence Acquisition Council
DRDO	Defence Research & Development Organization
EEZ	Exclusive Economic Zone
ESM	Electronic Support Measures
EW	Electronic Warfare
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Areas
FOST	Flag Officer Sea Training
FSI	Foreign Service Institute
GOC	General Officer Commanding
GRSE	Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers
GSAT	Geosynchronous Satellite
IAI	Israel Aerospace Industries
IB	Intelligence Bureau

IBGs	Integrated Battle Groups
ICG	Indian Coastal Guards
IDA	Island Development Agency
IDE-JETRC	Institute of Developing Economics-Japan External Trade Organization
IJN	Imperial Japanese Navy
IMAC	Information Management and Analysis Center
IMBL	international Maritime Boundary Line
INCOIS	Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services
IOK	Indian Occupied Kashmir
IONS	Indian Ocean naval Symposium
IOR	Indian Ocean Region
IORA	Indian Ocean Rim Association
IRA	Irish Republican Army
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Levant
ISIS-K	Islamic State – Khorasan Province
ISRO	Indian Space Research Organization
ITEC	Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation
ITEWS	Indian Tsunami Early Warning System
JGSDF	Japan Ground Self-Defence Force
JuA	Jamaatul Ahraar
KS&EW	Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works Limited
LeJ	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi
LeT	Lashkar-e-Tayyaba
LoAC	Line of Actual Control
LRBM	Long Range Ballistic Missile
LR-SAM	Long Range Surface to Air Missiles
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam
MDA	Maritime Domain Awareness
MDL	Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
MDS	Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders
MQM	Muttahida Qaumi Movement
MZI	Maritime Zone of India
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NSA	National Security Advisor
NSIL	New Space India Ltd
OBOR	One Belt One Road
PLA	Peoples Liberation Army
PLAN	People’s Liberation Army Navy
PM	Prime Minister
PMRI	People’s Resistance Movement of Iran

PNS	Pakistan Navy
POF	Pakistan Ordnance Factory
RAMICS	Rapid Airborne Mine Clearance System
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RIS	Research and Information System
RNO	Royal Navy of Oman
RSS	Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh
RWS	remote-weapon station
SAG	Surface Action Group
SAGAR	Security and Growth for All in the Region
SAM	Surface-to-Air Missiles
SLBM	Submarine Launched Ballistic Missile
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SSBN	Sub Surface Ballistic Nuclear
SSP	Sipah e Sahaba Pakistan
TSD	Technical Support Division
TTP	Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
USA	United States of America

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Abstract

The thesis examines India's maritime strategy and its geostrategic impact on the Indian Ocean Region and also on the Indo-Pacific region. India's naval modernization aims to secure its maritime interests in the IOR and increase its geopolitical role for the future. India wants to dominate the Indian Ocean Region and attain the status of key security provider for the allies. India has a coastline of around 7500 kilometers making India essentially a maritime nation and controlling the sea lanes of communication are important for the major economies of the world for uninterrupted trade. This study analyzes the key components of India's naval doctrine, its maritime strategy and modernization of its naval capabilities. India is emerging as a major economic power in the world; it also possesses an ambitious maritime development plan. It has employed offensive military doctrines and modernized its strategic capabilities to make the Indian Ocean as India's Ocean. India's naval doctrines and enhancement of maritime Strategic thinking gives the guiding principles for their futuristic perspective of the Indian Ocean. The two countries have never enjoyed good foreign relations as neighbours due to several geographical and strategic factors. The main reason for this delinquent relation is the unresolved territorial issues. The unresolved Kashmir Issue has triggered three full-fledged wars and several skirmishes on the Line of Control (LoC). The conflicting relations between the two countries has initiated an Arms Race in South Asia. The countries are in the pursuit of maximizing their military capabilities as a prerequisite for security. Secondly, India intends to dominate South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region as a sole major power with factors including strong economy and robust military capabilities enabling it to project power abroad. India wants to counter China in the Indian Ocean Region to play its deliberate role for safeguarding its maritime interests. India is swiftly modernizing its navy to deter China in the South China Sea and want to dominate the Indian Ocean region and beyond. This research is divided into four parts. The first part will set the theoretical base of the study and it shall be focused on Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory of sea power and John Mearsheimer's theory of Offensive Realism. The discussion will provide its relevance with Indian aims for maritime dominance. The second part will cover the rationale for India's maritime strategy by 2035. It will cover the strategy Indian employed to become hegemony in the Indian Ocean region, moreover the strategies like SAGAR, MAUSAM and Indian maritime strategy 2015 will be evaluated. The third part of

the research will cover the Indian naval modernization and how they will pose traditional challenges for Pakistan's security. India is developing new Aircraft Carriers, nuclear and conventional submarines, modern equipment for maritime domain awareness and surveillance, frigates, corvettes, destroyers and advanced air defence systems for the navy. These new weapon systems pose a direct threat to Pakistan's conventional security. The fourth part of the research covers nontraditional security challenges for Pakistan like India's Hybrid Warfare after 2008, CPEC Cell to sabotage trade corridor, and volatility in Baluchistan, Chaos and Mayhem in Pakistan's financial hub, Karachi and Mehran base attacks. The research will conclude on the findings, which will be collected by reviewing the literature and interviews of the people having scholarship on the subject. Pakistan is also using sea-lanes of communications for its trade and energy needs that compels it to formulate a counter strategy to safeguard its maritime interests and ensure deterrence stability in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. India's conventional armed forces and capabilities are stronger than Pakistan. However, it has to develop a strong naval force to cope with the traditional and nontraditional maritime challenges from India. This research explores India's maritime strategic thinking and traditional and nontraditional security challenges for Pakistan. The research/thesis concludes that although India aims to modernize its maritime strategy for its economic and security reasons and claims to increase regional connectivity and security situation. However, this rapid naval modernization in itself will jeopardize security situation and heightens strategic competition especially with China's growing role and also pose strategic challenges to Pakistan. The research further suggests policy recommendations for Pakistan to foster its maritime strategy to safeguard its vital national interests.

Chapter-1

1. Introduction

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a huge water body which comprises 20% water of the earth's surface 80 % of world's seaborne trade and 50% of world's container ships passes through the Indian Ocean Regional. Annually, over 100,000 merchantmen transit the waters of IOR carrying cargo worth about a trillion dollar. The forty percent of the world's oil supply and 64 percent of oil trade is carried out through this ocean.

India has a Coastline of around 7500 Km long making India essentially a Maritime Nation and it enjoys a 2 million square km EEZ, which requires huge naval force. India's economic growth has been increased by 6.7% since 2024. India established close relations with United States to increase its influence in IOR and signed several bilateral packs including LEMOA, BECA, COMCASA, STA1 and Industrial Security Annex.

The IOR is a vast water body and hosts three strategically most important choke-points. The Strait of Hormuz is located on the north-western, whereas the Strait of Malacca is located on the eastern part of IOR. The Strait of Malacca connects the South China Sea and the Pacific with the Indian Ocean. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), 60 percent of the maritime trade by volume passes through Asia, and the South China Sea carries about one-third of the global shipping (Pitakdumrongkit, 2023). The Strait of Hormuz lies between Iran and Oman, linking the Arabian Sea and the Gulf countries (Bahrain, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar). The 1/3rd of the globe's Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and 1/6th of the world's oil production (Durrani, 2025). The Bab el-Mandeb or the Strait of Djibouti is strategically a choke-point between Yemen and Djibouti that links the Red Sea to the

Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden. More than 21000 oil vessels pass through this strait per year and almost 57 oil vessels pass each day.

- i. The US base in Diego Garcia of the Chagos Islands,
- ii. the Chinese military base in the Obock region of Djibouti and
- iii. India, currently carried strategic deals with Australia for mutual adventures on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands. The establishment of the fifth Indian naval command on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal is another significant anti-China move.

China's String of Pearls Strategy refers to the development of a network of commercial and military ports and infrastructure along the Indian Ocean littoral, stretching from mainland China to the Middle East and Africa. The aim is to secure China's sea lines of communication (SLOCs), especially for energy imports, and to enhance its naval reach. The key strategic locations and ports are as follows,

- i. **Gwadar (Pakistan)**, a deep-sea port as part of CPEC – a flagship project under China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in the proximity of Strait of Hormuz. The most critical energy chokepoint.
- ii. **Hambantota (Sri Lanka)** is situated near a very small town of Sri Lanka in the IOR but the town is strategically located on a very busy East-West shipping route which serves as a logistics and supply route for China.

- iii. **Chittagong (Bangladesh)**, it is one of the busiest ports of IOR and Bangladesh's 90 percent maritime trade is based on this port. China has upgraded the port for its logistic supply and trade.
- iv. **Kyaukpyu (Myanmar)** is a major node in China's String of Pearls strategy due to its critical geopolitical and economic significance. China has invested around \$7 billion with 70-85% stake in the project.
- v. **Djibouti (Africa)** is located at the Horn of Africa, at the southern entrance of the Red sea near the Bab el-Mandeb Strait. It is strategically very significant place that connects the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden. The 30% of global trade flows through it.



Figure explains China's String of Pearls Strategy (Qazi, 2018)

India's Necklace of Diamonds Strategy is a counter to China's String of Pearls. It involves building strategic partnerships, naval bases, and maritime infrastructure with like-minded countries across the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) to encircle China and secure sea lanes. These countries metaphorically forms a necklace in the region unlike China's string of pearls. The cooperation among the maritime nations surrounding china would increase India's maritime standing and expands its regional role. India has developed strategic ties with the regional in helped in developing their ports in the IOR to counter China. Additionally, India has managed to increase its access to geographically important location and managed to develop its military bases in the backdrop of its maritime interests. India's key maritime ports under the project necklace of diamond includes,

- i. **Andaman & Nicobar Islands (India)** is located near the Malacca Strait, allows India to project its force in the region. India has developed its INS Kohassa (North Andaman) for regional surveillance.
- ii. **Duqm (Oman)**, is commercial port for trade and economic activity, however, India is using thir port for its trade and strategic interests. It has proximity to the Persian Gulf region which increases the importance of India's footsteps in the region. It is believed as a worthy and very precious diamond in India Necklace of Diamonds Strategy. In the context of QUAD and ASEAN engagement in the IOR, it strengthen India's Act East policy and regional partnership.
- iii. **Changi (Singapore)**, the Changi port or the Changhi naval base has a very strategically significant in the region. it is located in the proximity of the world's

most busy and strategic chokepoints of the world. Due to presence of oil producing countries.

- iv. **Sabang (Indonesia)** is located near the western mouth of the Strait of Malacca, making it geostrategically vital for stakeholders. It is a civilian seaport, however Indian supported strategical development to safeguard the maritime interests.
- v. **Diego Garcia (US)**, is home to US military bases, which is world's largest military base of United States outside America. It plays a significant role in maintaining the balance of power in the IOR. It is directly not part of the String of Pearls strategically aligned with India.
- vi. **Reunion Island (France)** serves as France's forward military outpost in the southwestern Indian Ocean. The port plays a key role in Indo-French strategic cooperation, and is relevant to India's "Necklace of Diamonds" strategy.



Figure explains China's String of Pearls Strategy (Jose, 2020)

This competition reflects a broader power rivalry, with both nations seeking dominance over key Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) and regional security architecture. Both countries are engaging the littoral countries with aids, infrastructural development, financial assistance and other likely project to increase their regional influence in IOR and beyond.



Author's own explanation of India's Necklace of Diamonds Strategy

The maritime strategy holds strategic significance due to a number of reasons including trade and economy, security, military power projection, alliances and partnerships. The essence of maritime strategy encompasses a wide range of deliberations and strategies to deal with the challenges. The strong countries give special importance to their navies. They develop strong naval capabilities; it was true in the 19th and 20th Century and it is still true today. Now, since the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is strategically the

most important theater of new the Great Game among global powers have deep concerns of regional major power China and to a lesser extent USA and Russia. Owing to this development, India has become more anxious to increase its role in the IOR and beyond. India is persistently and tenaciously transforming and modernizing its naval strategy to increase its strategic role in the region and at international level. The rapidness and novelty of this transformation has changed the strategic discourse of the entire region. The unresolved territorial conflicts have resulted in three major wars and numerous skirmishes on the Line of Control (LoC), Kashmir, Siachen and Sir Creek (Abbas, 2004). The conflicting and inadequate geostrategic circumstances have resulted in a power struggle and distrust. There is a huge asymmetry in the strategic capabilities of the two countries, Pakistan is also striving a lot to maintain a credible deterrence to repel any Indian misadventure in the region. Consequently, India is maximizing its power to increase geostrategic influence in the entire region and taking necessary steps to build formidable armed forces with offensive military doctrine. Although India has modernized the military and air force doctrines during the past two decades, however Pakistan has managed to attain a certain level of parity with respect to conventional asymmetries. Now, India has evolved its maritime strategy and stepped into a new arena to develop a viable Bluewater economy and control the waves in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond.

India on one side has started strengthening diplomatic and economic relations with other littoral countries of the Indian Ocean Region. India has launched several projects including SAGAR, MOSAM and Amrit Kaal vision 2047 to expand its naval muscle in the IOR and to counter rapidly increasing Chinese influence in the region. India intends to counter Chinese OBOR and 'politics of ports' with its own strategy.

India has started rapid modernization of its navy by inking clear national aims and alliance structure. Pursuant to this strategy, India increased the number of indigenously built advanced aircraft carriers, vessels, submarines, destroyers and other advanced weaponry systems to secure its vital maritime interest beyond its frontiers. The novelty of this transformation has entirely changed the force structure of the Indian navy, moreover it has also changed the strategic behaviour and poise of the Indian navy. They have procured a huge amount of equipment from foreign countries as well. The IOR is an important lane of communication and trade for all the littoral countries of this region. India's intentions of controlling this lane have certain strategic implications for Pakistan. Therefore, the government of Pakistan has great concerns for its maritime interests. The doctrinal transformation of the Indian army and modernization of the Air Force has one way or another affected Pakistan, the same will be repeated in the maritime domain as well. This offensive approach may challenge Pakistan's maritime interests and lead to conflict.

The Indian naval modernization also poses a number of non-traditional security challenges to Pakistan as well. India's strategic relations with Afghanistan and other Gulf countries intended to encircle Pakistan strategically. India has employed a hybrid war strategy against Pakistan and funded militias inside Pakistan. These militias have staged insurgency and spread mayhem, hatred and segregation in the society. The terrorist organization has turned the entire region of Baluchistan as a battle ground and bombing and target killings in Karachi is also the result of insurrection and violence. Terrorism has created anarchy in Baluchistan and the banned organizations are trained, operated and given safe extraction in Afghanistan. The terrorist activities of banned terrorist LeT, Jundullah, TTP, BLA and RAW are against the peace and national cohesion.

The conclusion and findings of the research shall provide a true and updated picture of Indian maritime strategy in the Indian Ocean Region and its implications on Pakistan. The study aims to help in understanding the traditional and non-traditional security challenges for Pakistan in pursuant of the Indian naval modernization. Moreover, the findings and recommendations of the instant research shall give a policy guideline to the people involved in the formulating the foreign and defence policy of the country.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Indian maritime strategic thinking and aggressive behavior of its navy is posing serious challenges to Pakistan's interests in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. The study would focus on the traditional and non-traditional challenges to Pakistan's maritime interests. The quest of the Indian navy to dominate the Indian Ocean region would undermine Pakistan and push the country for aggressive moves that may lead to unwarranted consequences for regional and global security.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

This research aims to achieve following objectives

- i. To examine the significance / rationale of the Indian Maritime Strategic Thinking.
- ii. To examine the trajectory of Indian Maritime expansion in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond.
- iii. To analyze Traditional Security Challenges to Pakistan's Maritime interests by the Indian Navy.
- iv. To explore the nontraditional security challenges to Pakistan vis-à-vis India.

1.3 Research Questions

On the basis of abstract, statement of the problem and Research objectives following questions have been formulated that are to be answered.

- Q. 1. What is the rationale of the Indian Maritime Strategic Thinking?
- Q. 2. How Indian Navy is posing Traditional Security Challenges to Pakistan's Maritime interests?
- Q. 3. What are the nontraditional security challenges to Pakistan vis-à-vis India?

1.4 Significance of the Study

The strategic stability of South Asia is at high risk due to India's maritime strategic thinking and rapid modernization in the naval force. The nuclear weapons have brought deterrence stability in South Asia; moreover, Pakistan has gradually developed parity and balance of power in land and air. However, India's maritime 2015 and their modernization in navy will change the balance of power by 2035 pose existential threats to Pakistan's security. Pakistan needs to adopt new options for formulating maritime strategy and advance in this arena to drive the country out from expected Indian dominance in the region. It will help in understanding the geostrategic appeal to Pakistan from traditional powers in the IOR and transatlantic region. The research is aimed to understand and evaluate its impact, and to see how that option can help in maintaining a strategic balance of power. It will also fill the gap in this field because most of the available research works are covering foreign policy challenges and maritime significance with respect to trade, business and economic integration. However, this research aims to cover different aspects of traditional and nontraditional challenges to Pakistan which are raised from the current Indian naval modernization.

1.5 Delimitation of the Study

The study mainly depends on open-source materials including books, journals, newspapers, websites, online and personal interviews relating to Indian strategic thinking and maritime modernization because the study material is very limited. Moreover, the area of research is related to India's naval strategy and required documents are apparently unavailable and inaccessible for researchers. Moreover, the research is also bound to an era after 2001, because the doctrinal transformation has taken place in the recent past. It will also cover India's futuristic perspective for maritime strategy until 2035.

1.6 Review of the Related Literature

The author *C. Raja Mohan* (2012) in his book titled *Samundra Manthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific* states that both China and India are upcoming major maritime powers in the region. Both countries are expanding their naval muscles for securing their gradually increasing maritime interests. Both countries are focused on the Indo-Pacific for the expansion of their maritime trade and strategic interests. The book title *Samundra Manthan* or "to churn the ocean" refers to a fiction from ancient Hindu mythology that the geopolitical conflict between China and India has shifted from high mountains of Himalayas into deep blue sea Indo-Pacific. The book intends to justify and rationalize the modern Indo-China maritime rivalry into historical and mythological manner (Mohan, *Samudra Manthan: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Indo-Pacific*, 2012).

In the book titled, *Strategic Asia 2012-13: China's Military Challenge*, the author *Arun Saghal* in collaboration with leading experts of Defence and foreign policy assess and forecast the gradual transformation of China's defence and foreign policy decision making towards the United States in general and towards its region in particular. It further shed light on China's

vital strategic aims and ambitions towards the Indo-Pacific. Moreover, the book also helps in providing scholarly understanding of China's long-term interests in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf region. In the context of these new great games the book will provide a thoughtful insight and critical aspects of US policy of “strategic rebalancing” to China’s rising military and naval power (Tellis & Tanner, 2012).

The author *Ian Hall* (2014) in his book titled *the Engagement of India: Strategies and Responses* states that different states like China attempted to influence India with their opposite strategic and foreign policy agendas, but even after that they remained unable to influence. India did not deviate from its strategic ambition. The attempt for deviation aimed to change India’s foreign policy discourse and they pursued a transformation of its maritime strategy. India remained curious to engage in diplomacy and foreign policy decision making to maximize its positive role in the regional and international arena. This book explores the strategies that attract different countries to engage in relationships with India, an emerging major power in the region. Here, the majority of the aspirant countries are those who consider China as a threat in the region and act as a balancing arch in the region (Hall, 2014).

The author *Yves-Heng Lim* (2014), in the book titled, *China's Naval Power: an Offensive Realist Approach* argues that China has significantly advanced more in its military and airpower than navy. However, after the end of the Cold War, the rapid modernization of the Chinese Navy and its growing influence in the Indo-Pacific is a well-documented reality today. The Chinese Navy was an outdated and obsolete kind of force with traditional vessels and equipment. It was not in a position to pose a threat to the US naval presence in the region and even it was not in a position to safeguard China’s rapidly growing maritime interests. The People’s Liberation Army Navy has dramatically evolved and modernized its conventional and

non-conventional capabilities, which reflect that the international system, regional realities and China's growing economy has strategically changed Chinese choices (Lim, 2014).

The author *David Brewster* (2014) in his famous book titled *India's Ocean: the Story of India's Bid for Regional Leadership* explores that India is playing an important role as a major power in the Indian Ocean. The book further states that the Indian Ocean Region is gradually becoming India's areas of influence and its rapidly falling in the hands of India. The major cause is because India is modernizing its naval capabilities in the region and at the same time diplomatically and economically engaging with the neighbouring countries sharing the maritime boundaries. India is strengthening its strategic relations with the countries of the Middle East, East Africa, Southeast Asian nations and Australia. The book further explores the nature and dynamics of India's strategic relations with the United States with special reference to China's growing power in the region. The book concludes with the argument that the region's strategic stability is at high stake and gradually changing due to continuous power struggle. Moreover, the author wants to conclude that India is becoming a major power in the Indian Ocean Region which can counterbalance China in the future (Brewster D. , *India's Ocean: The Story of India's Bid for Regional Leadership*, 2014).

The book titled *Indian Navy Strategy in the Twenty-first Century* co-write by *James R. Holmes, Andrew C. Winner* and *Toshi Yoshihara* (2009) investigates and provides a systematic understanding of India's maritime traditions with special reference to western strategic and military thought. This comparative study helps in understanding India's emerging maritime strategic thought. The book develops a thoughtful approach in explaining how some major powers of Europe planned a strategy to navigate and develop strong naval capabilities during the Age of Discovery while the rest of the world deserted the seas. Those nations were focused

on the land armies and developing other means of defence and strategy. It led to the western dominance and rise, which spread over many centuries. The west increased its riches from expansions and plunders of other nations. In the modern times, with the start of 21st century, the Asian States like China and India are once again focused towards modernizing their naval capabilities. These countries are investing a huge amount of their riches to the development and modernizing of their navies, maritime strategies, weapons, modern stealth vessels and coast guards. The book investigates how the Indian Navy will develop itself in the coming years and how New Delhi intends to craft a naval doctrine and its sea capabilities and the way it will use force capability. Moreover, the major grounds of this book are focused on the historical, traditional and cultural dimensions of Indian maritime strategy (Holmes, Winner, & Yoshihara, 2009).

The book titled *India's Naval Strategy and Asian Security* co-write by Anil Mukherjee and C. Raja Mohan (2015) investigates and explores the rapidly growing strategic significance of the Indian Navy. India is a rising power in South Asia due to consistently expanding its military and economic capabilities. This emerging power status has led to new debates on changing the balance of power in Asia. The book provides a thoughtful discourse on the rapidly changing Indian maritime alignments with special reference to its military and defence diplomacy with the other regional countries. The author wants to reflect that today India's naval strategy has gradually floated from the margins of its security strategy to the core of its defence policy especially after 2015. It reflects New Delhi's security consciousness towards seas for safeguarding their maritime interests. The book helps in understanding the gap between external maritime challenges and internal equivocation and ambivalences, moreover it observes the gap between the two. The impact of India's naval modernization on global

security and its options for consistently changing strategic possibilities, the internal and external dimensions of Indian maritime strategic future is in a dynamic flux (Mukherjee & Mohan, 2015).

The author *Geoffrey F. Gresh* (2020) in his famous book titled *To Rule Eurasia's Waves: the Great Power Competition at Sea* states that Eurasia's rapidly emerging powers like China, Russia and India are progressively focused towards new maritime geographies, trade routes and expansionism. They are flexing their muscles in the region to expand economic, political, military and strategic influence in the region. The maritime routes passing through this region are economically and strategically very important and play an important role in the geopolitical economy of the region. Moreover, the maritime Eurasia has a number of very important maritime checkpoints which play a significant role as an energy corridor. The importance of this region is to a degree that it challenges the US and Europe's dominance in the Atlantic world (Gresh, 2020).

The author Dr. Saji Abraham (2015) in the book titled *China's Role in the Indian Ocean: its Implications on India's National Security* argues that India is located at the "area of instability", this is due to the reason that the most of the nation in the neighbourhood has suffering from economic discrepancies. Most of the smaller nations in the region are striving hard to evolve themselves, developing and modernizing themselves for survival. The region is hosting a giant dragon i.e., China and the Indian Ocean Region and Indo-Pacific is providing a maritime route to transport oil from the Gulf region. Due to the US presence in the region and its engagements with regional countries China is also developing and modernizing its naval capabilities to strengthen its position in the region. On the other side Indo-US nexus is working to counterbalance China and India has started rapid modernization in the naval capabilities that

may lead to some limited confrontation in the future. Moreover, the clash of interests in the Indian Ocean Region is also showing some fire underneath because India wants this region to be the Indian area of influence. The book also provides a comprehensive account of recent modernization of China's military capabilities with special focus to its strategy of power projection. It also provides an understanding of Indian naval interests and the strategies and methodologies employed by the Chinese policy makers for the strategic encirclement of India (Abraham, 2015).

The author *Harsh V. Pant* (2016) in his book titled *the Rise of the Indian Navy* argues that India is using its military power especially the naval capabilities as an important tool for regional and international diplomacy. The Indian strategists and naval thinkers have started considering navy as an important tool of India's modern diplomacy and foreign policy decision making. In recent years, they are developing strong and formidable naval muscle to influence the regional and global countries for regional economic and geostrategic integration. Maritime security has become an important tradition in India's border security paradigm. This book covers detailed account of issues relating to India's security and maritime domain, furthermore, it also causes and impact of Indian naval capability in the region. Harsh V. Pant has a deep analytical understanding of India's strategic thinking and its implication in the security politics of this region (Pant, 2016).

The book titled *Deep Currents and Rising Tides: The Indian Ocean and International Security* co-write by *John Garofano* and *Andrea J. Dew* (2013) argues that the Indian Ocean Region is at the spotlight of new geostrategic great games. This region has become a pivot of new geostrategic rivalry not only among the major powers of this region but the USA, Europe and Russia are also part of this competition. The aspects of this struggle and security issues are

very diverse. The problems relating to piracy, political antagonism and extremism, threats relating to seaborne trade, nuclear arms race and bilateral conflict between China and India fall in the exclusive domain of this region's security politics (Garofano & Dew, 2013).

The book titled *China in Indian Ocean Region* is a book co-written by Dr. Sidda Goud and Manisha Mookherjee (2015) states that the Indian Ocean enjoys the status of third largest ocean of the world after the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Its strategic significance is very important since it serves as a strategically important trade route and energy corridor. The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is surrounded by Asia, Africa and Australia and serves as a busy maritime highway with a huge number of mega ships transporting the people, goods and energy to the different parts of the world. The statistical records reflect that roughly two thirds of the world's oil tankers and one third of the world's bulk cargo ships passes through this region (Goud & Mookherjee, 2015).

The book titled India's *Evolving Deterrent Force Posturing in South Asia: Temptation for Pre-emptive Strikes, Power Projection, and Escalation Dominance*, co-written by Zulfiqar Khan and Zafar Khan (2020) discusses that India's rapidly increasing deterrent force posturing and a huge number of standing military force with its nuclear capability is posing conventional and non-conventional strategic implications in the region. These implications and India's strategic deliberations are affecting the defence and foreign policy decision making of the neighbouring countries especially for those who already are in a state of conflict with India. The book also reflects India's military capabilities, its nuclear strategy and rapidly expanding designs are causing threat perceptions in India's adversaries i.e., China and Pakistan (Khan & Khan, 2020).

The authors *Greg Kennedy* and *Harsh V. Pant* (2016) in their book titled *Assessing Maritime Power in the Asia-Pacific: the Impact of American Strategic Re-Balance* specialized in understanding and analyzing the strategic issues under the domain of maritime. In this context, the author has scholarly analyzed the concepts of ‘pivot’ or ‘re-balance’ strategy and the ‘Air-Sea Battle’ operations concepts in the modern traditional and non-traditional military strategy. The book conceptualizes the rationale of US engagement in the Asia-Pacific for securing its national interests relating to security, economy and diplomacy. The rebalancing is an important ambitious initiative of Obama administration’s intuitive and determined foreign policy (Kennedy & Pant, 2016).

Shuja Nawaz, in his famous book titled “the Battle for Pakistan: The Bitter US Friendship and a Tough Neighbourhood” tries to highlight and elaborate the convergences and conjunctions of two inadequate partners of modern times i.e., United States and Pakistan. The two countries have been consistently engaged with each other for diplomatic and strategic partnership since 1950. However, the relations between the two countries have been celebrated and opposed due to many other regional and international factors and the Afghanistan factor has always been at the top of them. Pakistan has been compelled and constrained to a number of regional and international factors and they have directly affected its economy, development and posed existential threats to its security and survival. Externally it has been affected due to its porous border with Afghanistan and internally a number of militant fractions have been funded by its arch rival India.

The book titled “Hybrid Warfare and Its Impact on Pakistan's Security” inscribed by Saghir Iqbal focusses on different strategies employed by Pakistan’s enemies to weaken

Pakistan internally and externally. The regional conflicts in Afghanistan, Middle East, Ukraine, and other South Asian countries coincided with the volatility in Baluchistan and FATA. All these conflicts are directly or indirectly affecting the countries. Moreover, India and other regional forces have deliberately employed hybrid and asymmetric war strategies against Pakistan. They are trying to weaken Pakistan internally by activating sectarian, ethnic and sub-ethnic fault-lines fault lines and spreading venomous propaganda among the masses (Iqbal S. , 2018).

The author Khurram Siddiqui in his famous book titled “Security of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Counterinsurgency in Balochistan” deliberated the strategic significance of Baluchistan with respect to China Pakistan Economic corridor (CPEC). Since Baluchistan is an important region with respect to this project and Gwadar port, which will provide the sea outlet, is situated in the province. However, since the project has been initiated, the security situation of the province has deteriorated due to internal and regional factors. The terrorist organizations including BLA, TTP and other ethnically and religiously motivated banned groups started carrying out terrorist activities. It also analyzes the army’s counter insurgency practices and strategies to neutralize the situation (Siddiqui, 2024).

The book titled “Pakistan's Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army, and America's War on Terror” is a famous book published by Hassan Abbas. The author in this book has thoroughly discussed and analyzed Pakistan’s causes of tilt toward religious fundamentalism. The book has deliberated the root causes of frequent military interventions in Pakistan’s political realm and development of Islamist thought in the socio-political affairs of the country.

These developments and establishment of the madrassah system was aimed to fight the Soviet Union and also to bring regime change in Kabul. However, the Talibanization and military forces has one way or other affected the national harmony and cohesion of the country. Pakistan suffered a huge loss caused by sectarian violence, religious intolerance and abhorrence, which was later manipulated by India (Abbas, 2004).

The author Masood ur Rehman Khattak (2019) in the research article titled *Indian Military Modernization: Implications for Pakistan* argues that Indian military capabilities and its modernization will affect the current deterrence stability of South Asian region. The current conventional asymmetries and military posturing are manageable for the balance of power in the region. However, in the future, it seems that the overwhelming changes and modernization of Indian conventional force posturing and weapons capabilities will be difficult for Pakistan to manage. This is due to long-term conventional disproportion since India is developing long-range air defence systems, nuclear submarines, UAVs and advanced equipment for maritime domain awareness (Khattak M. u., 2019).

The author Siraj Nizamani (2014) in his research article titled *India's Emerging Indian Ocean Strategy* argues that the India is in the pursuit of increasing its role in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). The maritime doctrine of 2015 reflects that India intends to increase its naval capabilities, peace and rescue operations, maritime policing and controlling the illegal trafficking in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific. In this connection, India is giving special importance to the modernization of its naval capabilities. It will give India a leadership role in the region and capability to counter China's increasing role (Nizamani S. , 2014).

The author *Colonel Dr. Raja Muhammad Khan* (2010) in his research article titled *Strategic and Regional Implications of Indian Naval Expansion* states that the Indian naval expansion has serious implications for all the regional littoral states and especially for Pakistan. This is due to the reason that no other country of the Indian Ocean region, Bay of Bengal littoral or Arabian Sea littoral is posing any sort of a threat to Indian dominance and hegemonic designs. The Indian naval expansion is very fast and this is drastically affecting Pakistan's maritime security and interests because the country lags behind this development (Khan D. M., 2010).

The author *David Brewster* (2010) in the research article titled *an Indian Sphere of Influence in the Indian Ocean* sheds light on India's strategic ambitions in the Indian Ocean Region. It also explains the maritime perspectives of Indian strategic thinking in the post 9/11 era. The main driving force for the review of India's maritime strategy is due to its security from Chinese dominance. However, besides this official stance, there are many untold facts of India's modernization campaign and one of them is its expansionist designs for dominance in the region. New Delhi wants to establish a new Indian sphere of influence across the Indian Ocean Region for futuristic perspective (Brewster D. , 2010).

The author *Sufianullah* (2019) in a research article titled *Analyzing India's Naval Development Strategy* argues that India is eager to attain the great power status in international politics and since a strong and formidable maritime strategy is a prerequisite to achieve this status. The growing naval power is aimed to flex their naval muscle in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific to dominate the entire region. In the pursuit of achieving this objective India is engaging with the regional countries with trade and military diplomacy. The offensive naval doctrine reflects that India wants to be the regional policeman. The modernization and

weaponization of the Indian Navy will not only disturb the current balance of power in the region but it will also lead to escalation and intensification. The constant increase in the naval power, offensive doctrines, modern equipment and naval exercises with regional countries shows a threat to Pakistan's maritime security. (Sufianullah, 2019).

The author *Ghazala Yasmin Jalil* (2016) in her research article titled *Analysis of Indian Naval Capabilities: Implications for Pakistan* argues that India's naval modernization, extensive transformation in its weapons and nuclear capabilities are drastically disturbing the balance of power of this region. The instability in the Indian Ocean due to India's growing influence will lead to a new naval arms race and strategic adventurism. India is nuclearizing the Indian Ocean region with its new nuclear submarines and modern stealth destroyers. The Indian Ocean is already an epicenter of new great games among the great powers of the world. US are already present in the region to spy on Chinese activities, whereas China is also rapidly reinforcing its navy for the security of its maritime trade routes and energy supplies (Jalil, 2016).

The research article titled *India's Naval Expansion and Strategic Partnership with the US in the Indian Ocean Region: Implications for Pakistan* co-write by *Maira Afzazze Saeed* and *Umbreen Javaid* (2020) establishes the argument that US want to halt increasing political and economic influence of China in Asia and beyond. In this connection, they are backing India to counterbalance Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean and Indo-Pacific region. Indo-US nexus is helping India to become an emerging maritime power in the region because India wants to attain the status of sole security provider in the IOR. The growing naval influence is raising questions to the strategic stability of the region. India's maritime aims will not remain limited to China rather India will obviously pursue a strategy to achieve its own interests in the

region. They would obviously be eager to deploy their capabilities against their arch rivals by yielding asymmetrical strategies. This situation will fuel a new arms race in the region (Saeed & Javaid, 2020).

The author Sidra Khan (2016) in the famous research article titled *India's Quest for Hegemony in the Indian Ocean* argues the Indian military doctrines in general and recent Indian naval doctrine in particular reflects that India's military leadership and strategists do not consider India as a major power of Indo-Pacific rather they want to project India as an international power. India is a power that is aspirant to manage the Chinese rise in the region and also at global level. The Indian naval doctrine is pronounced as Modi's doctrine for the Indo-Pacific region (Khan S. , 2016).

1.7 Research Methodology

In social sciences, the research methodology is a systematic approach and technique to carry out organized inquiry, empirical investigation, study behaviour of individual, state or other socio-political development in a particular manner. In Pursuant to carrying out such organized study, the research follows certain methodological patterns to make research design, collect data, analyzing, investigating and interpreting the data by applying different sampling techniques. The research methodology in social science typically includes the following components.

1.7.1. Research Design

The qualitative approach will be employed in the study. This approach involves both primary and secondary data for analyzing, investigating and interpreting texts. The objective interviews are also conducted to reach any conclusion. The research will mostly be dependent on reliable secondary sources including scholarly works, books, and journal articles and

newspapers columns. The renowned scholars have academic authority on regional Security politics and specially focusing on the Indian Maritime Strategic thinking and traditional and nontraditional security challenges for Pakistan. The in-depth interviews of diplomats, research scholars, military officers and researchers of renowned think tanks will be taken to understand and rationalize different aspects of this research. The intellectual understanding of different people having scholarship on the Indian maritime strategic thinking will be utilized through their writings and in person interviews.

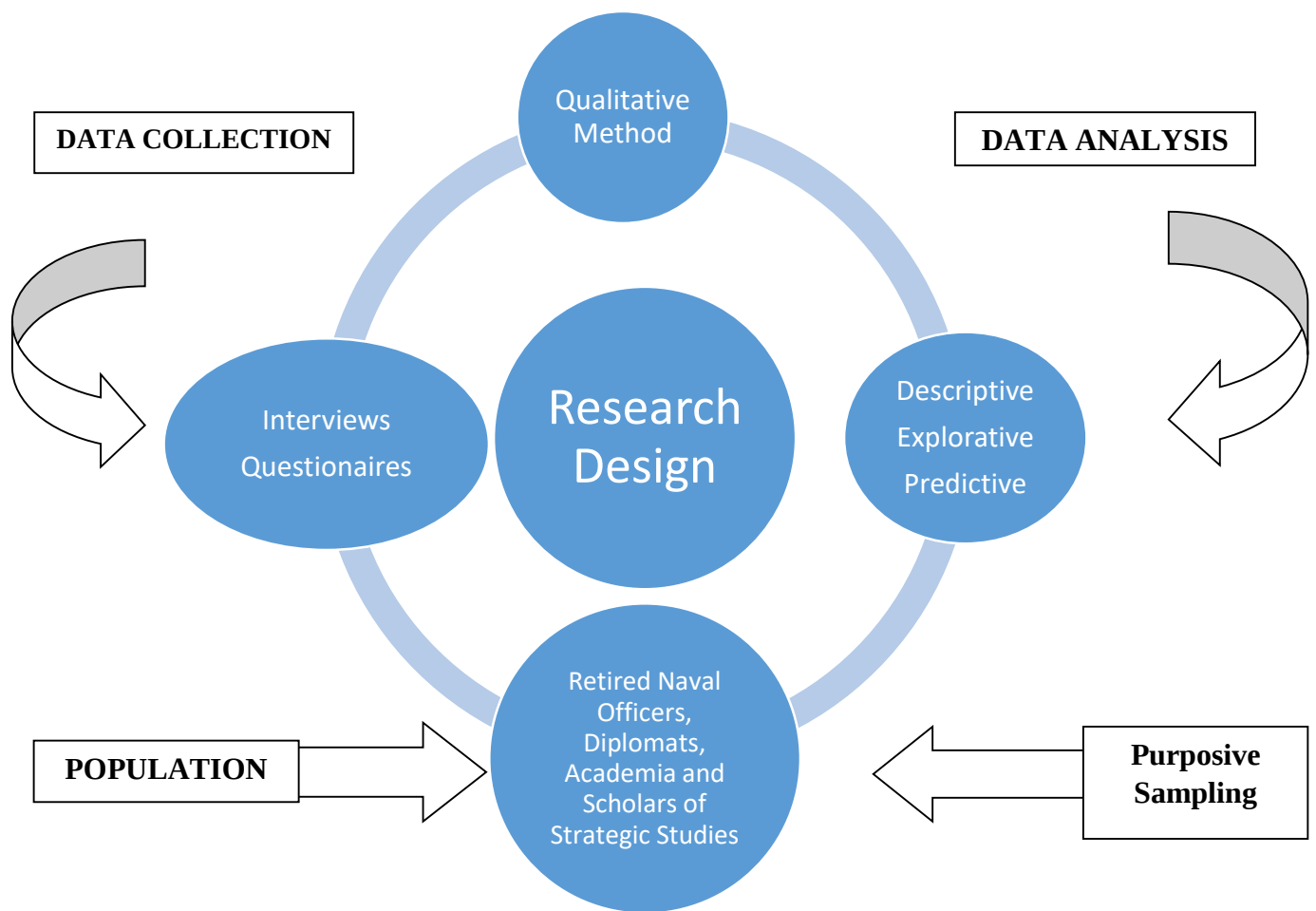


Figure: Author's own Description of Research Design

Discourse analysis method of qualitative research concerned with the investigation of language and one might reasonably expect linguistics, the discipline concerned with the study

of language, to be the root for discourse analyses (Gillen & Petersen, 2005). In fact, the term discourse analysis is a term used to embrace and accommodate a number of investigating techniques for humanities or social science research. The theory of discourse analysis is closely connected to Michel Foucault's research work and publications from 1963 to 1971. During this period Foucault expanded his in-depth research in the field of history of linguistics and how words were placed and used in history at various stages of time. Moreover, according to the author it's not some independent theory or method but a particular paradigm in which the human sciences perceive this world (K, 2009). The discourse theory perceives the entire social and political phenomenon as discursive constructions and it believes that this phenomenon can be studied and debated under the theory of discourse analysis.

1.7.2. Population

The population consists of the group of people with a specific professional and academic background relevant to the particular research. This set of population consists of specific characteristics and possesses significant importance to the researcher for interview and data collection. This importance is due to the reason that this population is a point of convergence with respect to the research. The renowned scholars from India and Pakistan will be interviewed and approached for quality analysis.

1.7.3. Sampling and Data Collection

It is most important to be selective and precise in data collection because not all the individuals have the same level of relevance to the field. Therefore, only selected people have to be interviewed. It is almost impossible to target every single individual for the purpose of data collection; therefore, a segment of the population is targeted and selected for evolution and assessment. The positive sampling technique will be utilized for the research.

1.7.4. Data Analysis

The research is based on descriptive and both methodologies of primary and secondary data collections shall be employed. The data shall be analyzed and quality of success will be analyzed in the context of discourse analysis theory.

1.7.5. Work Plan

Chapter-1: Introduction

Chapter-2: Theoretical Framework: *Offensive Realism- (Structural Realism- John Mearsheimer) - Alfred Thayer Mahan,*

Chapter-3: The Indian Ocean in Mahan's Maritime Doctrine: Theoretical Insights and Applications

Chapter-4: Indian Maritime Strategy by 2035: *Rationale*

Chapter-5: Indian Naval Modernization: *Traditional Security Challenges*

Chapter-6: Non-Traditional Security Challenges

1.8 Background of the Study

The security environment of the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is in a state of flux due to the rivalry of regional powers. The emergence of new a struggle for maritime dominance has changed the entire strategic discourse of the region. It is not confined to the existing geo-economic world order. The issue is important and substantial that the entire construct of international diplomacy and successful execution of foreign policy is based on economic capability and power projection. The United States of America (USA) is the world's strongest maritime power and followed by rising China. China is becoming the strongest challenger to US hegemony in the South China Sea and beyond According to Chinese President Xi Jinping, the naval modernization associated with becoming world class "to be largely completed by 2035," just 15 years away (McDevitt, 2020). China is rapidly growing its capabilities of power projection and expeditionary capabilities far beyond its shores. President Xi Jinping has

vigorously pushed the People's Liberation Army of China to increase the expeditionary services of the Navy to safeguard its trade and energy routes. It will be advanced enough to challenge any naval force in the world. Moreover, it will dislodge the US from its only superpower status (ABP, 2022).

The geopolitical situation of the South Asian region is at stake due to India's modernization drive and the doctrinal transformations are directly affecting the geostrategic stability of the entire region. The modernization programs are increasing conventional disparities between the two countries have resulted in Pakistan's increased dependency on its nuclear program. This is due to India's Pakistan centric war doctrines and unresolved territorial issues are haunting the region. Pakistan's nuclear program is the only option that can warn India from any entrenched obsession or misadventure against it.

India's booming economy and rapid modernization of its military capabilities reflects that India is in the pursuit of becoming the regional and global power (McKercher, 2012). India has reformed the trajectory of its military modernization, arms procurement and weapons buildup during the past two decades. Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, aimed to correct the imbalances and imparities in the defence capabilities of Indian armed forces with respect to China. This pace of modernization has dramatically changed after the Sino-India clash in the Galwan valley in the Himalayas. New Delhi has given special focus to its naval capabilities and intended to deploy a deterrent blue water navy. India has given special focus to the advancement of its military capabilities and resultantly the Indian army stands at the third on the global ranking (Singh D. K., 2019). The adoption of Pakistan centric war doctrines is an important feature of Indian strategic thinking (Sahgal, 2012). However, India has always claimed that its defence program aimed to safeguard its national interests against China. In this

connection, the nascent reform efforts have increased to a higher pace. The modernization shall create a security situation against Pakistan and increase arms race in the region. Pakistan can only fill the conventional gaps by increasing its reliance on sophisticated nuclear programs.

In the post 9/11 era, there is a lot of doctrinal transformation in Indian maritime strategy due to the significance of the Indian Ocean. In the past, the Indian Ocean, Persian Gulf and South China Sea had geo-economics zones with comparatively less geostrategic significance. However, it has dramatically changed in the last few years and the change is taking place due to three major factors.

- a) The energy and economic interdependence based in the sea-lanes of communications.
- b) The second is the China factor and its growing influence in the Indian Ocean.
- c) Most importantly due to the perpetrator factors, hindering their dominance plans which they link to Pakistan.

These factors tilt India towards formulating a comprehensive strategy for maritime dominance. In this connection, India has initiated new projects for maritime cooperation with the neighbouring countries for trade and security integration like Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR). SAGAR is a strategy formulated in consideration of its core national interests; India is trying to preserve, promote and protect major maritime gains, including protection of territorial integrity against sea-based threats, advancement of the Blue Economy, and protection of maritime resources within and beyond the MZI (Nitin, 2021). Secondly, the project MAUSAM is India's foreign policy initiative to deter growing influence on Chinese maritime routes. China is growing its footprints in East Asia and Indian Ocean due to its rapidly growing economic influence; moreover, China is stepping in India's backyard for strategic

interests. Most notable of these are the developments of Chinese funded and built deep-water ports in Sri Lanka, Pakistan and possibly the Maldives, which could, theoretically, be accessed by assets of the Chinese Navy (Daniel, 2015). Thirdly, the India's Maritime Strategy 2015 is formulated to increase its naval strength and capabilities not only to deter conflict and coercion against India but also to conduct maritime military cooperation in a manner that enables early termination of conflict on terms favourable to India (Singh, Parmar, & Sachdeva, 2015). The development of these maritime strategies is aimed to increase Indian influence in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean Region (IOR) to manage the geostrategic factors against China and Pakistan. Moreover, in order to achieve its objectives India is trying to sabotage Pakistan China's strategic nexus by extending its naval capabilities.

In 2013, India commissioned the first indigenously built aircraft carrier ***INS-Vikrant*** to its naval force. It took thirteen years to build this 45000 tons heavy aircraft carrier which can hold 30 fighter jets and helicopters and home of 1700 crew members ("INS Vikrant: Inside India's newly-commissioned aircraft carrier", 2013). It maintains 171 vessels along with more than 250 aircraft and 16 submarines. India is the only South Asian country with an aircraft carrier and, by 2020; it plans to maintain three aircraft carriers for ensuring its dominance in the Indian Ocean Region (IORs) (Bajpayee, 2015). In 1999, Indian Navy initially proposed a 30 years strategic plan to build 24 ***Conventional Submarines*** in collaboration of eastern and western designs and it was not intended to build any nuclear submarine. However, before building 12 submarines the plan was changed to build mixed conventional and nuclear submarines. New Delhi is now working on the plan of building mixed conventional and six attack ***Nuclear Submarines*** (Singh A. , 2016).

In 2013, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) launched a dedicated military communication satellite for surveillance and domain awareness, it was called **GSAT-7 Rukmini**, it covers around 2000 nautical miles in sea ("What is GSAT-7 Rukmini?", 2017). The US State Department approved the sale of six Boeing-made **P-8I anti-submarine aircraft** for maritime surveillance for an estimated cost of \$2.42 billion ("US State Dept OKs sale of patrol planes to India", 2021). Previously, in 2009, the India's Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS) agreed for the procurement of Boeing and eight P-8I maritime reconnaissance aircraft to the Indian Navy, four additional P-8I aircraft in mid-2016 and another six in 2019 ("P-8I Multimission Maritime Patrol Aircraft, India", 2021). India is procuring almost 500 **Kamov Helicopters** from Russia to replace their obsolete Cheetah fleets, some 800 helicopters will be required in the next decade (Katoch, 2021). These are multirole helicopters, which will perform disaster relief operations, reconnaissance, and transport and petrol operations. In February 2019, India signed a bilateral agreement with the USA for the procurement of 24 multirole **Romeo Sikorsky Seahawk helicopters** to replace Sea king Helicopters (Gady F.-S. , 2020). This will provide India anti-surface and anti-submarine warfare capabilities with maneuverability (Mehta, 2019). India is furthering its maritime domain awareness edge by purchasing US **MQ-9 Reaper**, a lethal drone for maritime targeting and surveillance. The Indian government has signed an agreement for 30 drones, 10 for each armed service (Tiwari, 2022).

In September 2022, India launched its fifth Frigate of **project 17A Frigates**, an advance version of project 17 frigates with improved stealth features (Bahtic, 2022). The ship is equipped with a 76mm main gun, two 30 mm AK-630M anti-aircraft artillery systems, two torpedo tubes, launchers for eight BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles and 32 Barak-8 surface

to air missiles (Vavasseur, 2022). The Corvettes is the smallest, fast and attack vessel of Navy which gives it maneuverability, convenient coastal patrol and an especial anti-submarine role during naval war. On June 6, 2022, the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) acknowledged the need for the procurement of 7 stealth **Corvettes** for the Indian Navy costing \$9.8 billion (Ozberk, 2022). The deployment of these corvettes will be for the purpose of deterrence, surveillance, Surface Action Group Operations (SAG), littoral defence and anti-submarine attack operations. The first of four **Project 15B Stealth Destroyer**, equipped with guided missiles were commissioned in the Indian Navy during November, 2021 and they were manufactured by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) ("Indian Navy receives first Project 15B guided missile destroyer", 2021). These warships are also named as Visakhapatnam-class ships. The Indian navy received **Barak-8 LR-SAM** from Israel Aerospace Industry (IAI) in 2018. The deal was announced that at a cost of \$777 million India will buy Barak-8 Long Range Surface to Air Missiles (LR-SAM) Air and Missile Defence System (AMD) and seven Indian ships will be outfitted with this system (Molenda, 2018).

India has also employed a number of military strategies against Pakistan and strategy of hybrid war is one of them. It is an unconventional and irregular strategy of war fighting in which a decentralized mechanism is employed. These are the fluid tactics designed to target conventionally a strong adversary with limited resources and non-traditional manner without waging a full-fledged war (Sheikh, 2007). The hybrid war is not confined to hitting the military installations rather it aims to target the economic development projects, activating the fault lines in the enemy states and exploiting all the vulnerabilities of the enemy. India has long been working on the internal socio-political and economic vulnerabilities of Pakistan and always activated the ethnic and sectarian fault-lines in the country. The Indian Intelligence officers

and political leaders have severally admitted that the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is backing the separatist elements in the country. They are successfully working on the internal vulnerabilities of Pakistan and paying the separatist organizations to carry out terrorist activities within the country. Pakistan is also facing a number of challenges with respect to socio-political, diplomatic, economic, internal, and external security. The Indians are working hard to achieve their three objectives of internally destabilizing the country, demoralizing the people with propaganda and disintegrating the country (Raza, 2019). The political and economic spine of the country is broken through terrorism and indoctrination of false propaganda.

Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) attacked at PNS Mehran Base in Karachi and destroyed two P-3C Orion surveillance aircrafts and a helicopter (Aziz, 2011). The P3-C was an aircraft for maritime domain awareness and it posed a strategic threat to India not to TTP in the tribal area. This reflects TTP's allegiance to India. The arrest of Kulbhushan Jadhav has unleashed new stories of Indian incursions in Pakistan and their alleged support to separatist elements Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), sectarianism, ethnic cleansing and volatility in Baluchistan, chaos and mayhem in Karachi (Ahmad, 2016). India is supporting TTP and other nationalist groups for subversions and terrorist activities in Pakistan to sabotage internal security of the country special in Baluchistan; moreover, the Joint Chief of Staff Committee Gen Zubair Mahmood Hayat alleged that India is running a \$500 cell to sabotage CPEC ("RAW running \$500 million cell to sabotage CPEC,' says Gen Zubair Hayat", 2017).

Chapter-2

2. Theoretical Framework of Doctrinal Maneuvering

Introduction

The theoretical framework of any social science research provides base and the foundational structure of any research is based on certain concepts, assumptions, propositions and contextualization, their relations with each other and the variables. They make the basic building blocks of any research and sometimes operationalize the main concept. The theoretical framework plays a very significant role in conducting social science research. It helps in formulating the guiding research design and a clear path to move in a particular direction by employing empirical technique and scientific approach of conducting the research. Moreover, the theoretical framework is also helpful in providing conceptual clarity due to understanding of relationships among different factors of research. The research is scientifically contextualized and the data is collected, analyzed and interpreted on the theoretical basis. The provision of advanced knowledge and academic interpretation of findings makes the theoretical framework an essential tool of social science research.

The doctrinal maneuvering is often studied in the context of military and strategic theory primarily within the framework of organizational behaviour, defence policy and military operations. It implies the practical manifestation of military doctrine, its execution in peace and war. It involves a set of established principles, concepts and strategies which entails adaptability, flexibility and implementation in different situations. Asymmetric warfare, informational warfare, and hybrid war are doctrinal concepts that originate in the dosimetry generated by technological gaps in the context of non-conventional aggression supported by maneuvering forces (Neag, 2018). The doctrinal maneuvering by India in the IOR is

multifaceted and it is aimed to ensure the force readiness and presence of formidable military force to secure their maritime interests in the Indo-Pacific. This reflects India's commitment to counter rapidly increasing Chinese presence. It will allow India to adjust its strategies and alliances to attain navigational freedom. The naval power projection is necessary for that purpose.

The glimpse of it can be observed from India's recent theatre level military exercises named TROPEX-2025 in the Indian Ocean. Indian Naval modernization and such exercises have very important geostrategic implications in the current geostrategic settings. India perceives China's geostrategic rise in the region as a major threat for its security. The rise in China's naval presence in the IOR and South China Sea is indeed perceived as a major security dilemma for India. India is in a state of geo-political competition with China for regional dominance. The Indian Ocean Region is a strategically important economic and maritime zone for India which claims as a lifeline for its economic well-being and China's increasing footprints in the region are raising horns of dilemma for India. The blue waters of Indian Ocean have always remained under India's sphere of influence and now China's "String of pearls Strategy" is an unavoidable strategic challenge for India which engages other littoral countries of IOR including Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Maldives in a strategic alliance to encircle India (Kumar D. , 2024). Due to the new Cold War between the USA, China and their respective allies in the South China Sea and IOR, China is rapidly growing its naval capabilities and increasing its naval posture in the blue waters by commissioning modern fleet, aircraft carriers, surveillance systems and well-equipped submarines to exert maximum force. This would directly overpower the Indian Navy and aimed to push them back to their shores.

India is also working hard to enhance its naval capabilities and engage strategically with the regional countries for geopolitical cooperation. They are advancing their naval ships, surveillance and defence policy. Their naval modernization of India is aimed to increase their maritime reach, conducting joint military exercises and controlling the strategic choke-points. The naval expansion is driven by two main reasons one is their rapidly expanding trade volume and their want to secure their maritime trade route. Secondly, due to the reason that India is an aspirant to be the regional hegemon and policeman.

The political and foreign policy relations of India and Pakistan have always remained fragile and insubstantial due to a number of reasons. The fundamental reason for this conflict was due to unjust partition of the two countries. The territorial conflict over Kashmir, Siachen and Sir Creek has always led to hot pursuit between the two countries. They resulted in the three full-fledged wars and a number of skirmishes on the LOC.

The strategic standoff between the two countries is not confined to the unresolved territorial issues; in fact, India is in the pursuit of becoming the regional policeman. In this regard, India has developed aggressive military doctrine and opted for maximization of its military capabilities. The aggressive strategic approach is not a new phenomenon in Indian political and strategic affairs; rather India has long been aggressive in its policy towards Pakistan. Since the time of Indra Gandhi, India vehemently aimed to be the regional hegemony and intervene in the regional affairs. In 1962, due to India's aggressive strategy on the border areas, Sino-India conflict broke out and the two countries fought limited war on the border area. By invading NEFA, the PRC did not just aim to force a humiliated India to recognize its possession of the Aksai Chin, it also hoped to get, once and for all, the upper hand in their shadowing competition (Rechard, 2017). In 1971, Indra Gandhi was not afraid of crossing the

international border in East Pakistan and fought directly with the Pakistan army by expanding their military operations. In November 1971, India began to inch towards full-scale military invasion and put an Indian general in charge of the joint command of freedom fighters and Indian troops (Schendel, 2020). In 1980, India deployed forces in Sri Lanka and Maldives and the armies stood eyeball to eye with each other. India intervened in those countries due to its offensive approach.

India is aspiring for a major power status at regional level and it can only be achieved through economic power and modernization of military capabilities which are the most significant factors in this pursuit. India is economically progressing and the overall economy is expanding due to its close collaboration with major powers of the world. India is a huge market, institutionally viable country with a robust industrial and IT sector. These features attract the foreign countries to trade and invest in the country. Besides that, India is rapidly modernizing its maritime strategy and using full potential to attain the hegemonic status in the region by addressing internal weakness and adversaries. The military modernization is not only confined to increasing power rather the same is linked to anti Pakistan rhetoric in their politics. This approach has dramatically increased since Narendra Modi led Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and came in power. BJP has transformed the entire country based on anti-Pakistan rhetoric and Modi fought tooth and nail to sustain his position at the top. His anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan vivid stance is source of concerned with a huge modernization plan for strategic expansion in the region raises security concerns for Pakistan. Modi is a man who was groomed after the age of 10 by Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a vast and influential Hindu revivalist conservative movement that has been banned three times in India (Ahmed, 2016).

2.1 Hindutva and Rise of Hindu Nationalism

Hindutva is a radical ideology that emerged in the 20th century in the subcontinent and they primarily used nationalism based on Hinduism. It negates other religious fractions of India, claims the sole right of Hindus to dominate India, and prosecutes people associated with other religious groups. Although the religious foundations of Hinduism were laid thousand years ago, the emergence of radicalization in the form of Hindutva doctrine started in the 20th century. It was due to the reason that Vinayak Damodhar Savarkar incorporated the new radical ideological phenomenon in the religion in 1923 in the famous book, Hindutva: who is a Hindu? The book glorified Hinduism and set certain rules and characteristics of Ideal Hindus. The particular era was the time when new nationalist movements were emerging in the west during the interwar period. The nationalist character, superiority and racism based on faith is the property that seems borrowed from Nazism and Fascism. The reflection of Hindutva in the Indian national politics and defence policy is evident and have various dimensions. These have emerged more rapidly and dramatically in the recent decades. Hindutva is an ideology which is associated with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP). RSS is a radical organization established based on Hindutva that glorifies Adolph Hitler. Although, it was regarded as terrorist organization however, it managed to remain in power corridors for several decades. They admire and idealize Hitler for his his attempts to purify Germany by exterminating the people from other ethnic origins.

RSS has started purifying India by marginlizing other religious groups, claiming it is for the greater good of Hindus. They have also started training Hindus from a very young age and taught them the nationalist agendas. They consider Muslims as nastiest enemies than British colonizers. The Shuddhi Movement was initiated by Swamy Dayanand and in Sinsikrat

Shuddhi means purification. According to this movement the Muslims and Christians who has embarrassed new religion by their will and heart were forcefully converted back to Hinduism. In this movement in Gudiwara, about 3000 Dalits who has accepted Christianity and a biggest event in Agra took place in which two lakh Hindus were forced back to Hinduism (Sahai, 2010). The movement was mainly based on an objective to reclaiming the Hindus whose forefathers had been converted to Islam. The movement of Arya Samaj set by Swamy Dayanandji was further carried forward by his disciple Swamy Shraddhanandji (1856-1926). The Sangathan Movement is another religious and socio-political movement campaign initiated in the 20th century for Hindu revivalism. It was closely associated to Arya samajh and it emerged in response to British rule in India and the primary objective of this movement was to contain rapidly spreading Islam and Christainity in India. It advocated for Hindu solidarity in India. Lala Lajpat Rai and Swami Shraddhanand were prominent political figures of this campaigns. This is the reason they started carrying out communal violence to weaken Muslims in terms of economy, numbers and all other aspects of life.

The ideological features of RSS were based on their claims of cultural nationalism, opposing national integrity, opposing secularism, Hindu identity, and religious fundamentalism, maximizing strength and opposing other religious and cultural groups. They wanted to establish a political order that was generally against westernization and especially against Muslims and Christians. In 1951, a radical member of RSS, Godse assassinated founder of India, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Khalid, 2022) and in reaction to this attack around 20000 RSS members were detained and declared as a terrorist organization. However, the ban was lifted after few a years and RSS started increasing the number of its members. It reached

600,000 in the next few years and now the number has reached to more than 2 million and divided into 25000 branches (Jaffrelot, 2010).

The RSS has gained a considerable influence in the national politics as BJP came to power. The nationalist approach in the national politics and defence policy were adopted. The ideologically loyalists to RSS ideology were appointed to the key military and advisory positions. The defence policies of Prime Minister Narendra Modi are specially inclined towards a strong nationalist approach with execution of foreign policy to gain national pride, self-reliance and sustainable development in all spheres of life (Adil, 2024). He advocated policies which are aimed to project power abroad, ensure national security and that can only be possible by modernization of military capabilities.

The reflection of Hindutva in the security politics and strategy of the Indian government can be observed with respect to their relations with neighbouring countries like China and Pakistan. Due to their ideological strict stance and expansionist ambitions have led to the handling of issues like Kashmir purely on the basis of safeguarding the Hindu culture. They are more concerned for the defence of their Hindu ideological narrative than to provide an environment of socio-religious freedom for the greater good of the people. India has abrogated the Article 370 in Jammu and Kashmir in 2019 which has provided special autonomy to the region (Ramchandran, 2024). The policy is inspired from Israel's strategy towards Palestine which is based on extermination of Palestinian Muslims and turning them into a minority. India is also pursuant to inhabiting the Hindus in Jammu and Kashmir and it will change the demography of the region and help driving them out from their neighbouring Pakistan which enjoys ideologically and culturally shared values with Kashmiri people. Therefore, the influence of Hindutva in Indian politics can be observed in their politics and defence

arrangements and is a dominating rhetoric. This theory has shaped a particular political discourse in Indian politics and raised serious questions on India's claim of a secular state. It has raised a significant debate among the secular fractions of the world and unveiled India's secular face.

2.2 Theory of Sea Power by Alfred Thayer Mahan

Alfred Thayer Mahan, a famous lecturer and president of US Naval War College argued that the prosperity, power and its military can only be achieved if it controls the sea lanes. He further said that, "whoever rules the waves rules the world" (Historian, 2017). He suggested that if the United States really wants to be a great naval power it has to replace its wooden ships with strong steel vessels equipped with modern weapons and guns. He published a famous book titled, *the Influence of Sea Power upon History: 1660-1783*, a revolutionary analysis of naval power as a factor in the rise of British Empire, two years later it was followed by a supplementary volume, *the Influence of Sea Power upon French Revolution and Empire: 1793-1812*. The influence of a government as a sea power can work in two distinct and closely related ways.

First, in peace: the government formulates certain policies which help in the establishment of industries, trade and people's tendencies to change their economic position. The government develops naval capabilities for maritime trade and increases the outreach of merchants for sustainable economic development.

Secondly, for War: the governments develop a strong standing force and maintain maritime dominance for its national interests. The size of the navy will be relevant to its maritime interests and the growth of its arsenals and naval standing will be dependent on its requirements of foreign engagement. For instance, England has developed a very strong naval

force as compared to other colonial powers. It had truly benefitted its foreign interests as compared to others. The same was the case with France. Mahan has suggested the US government develop a strong naval power for the expansion of its strategic interests beyond the Atlantic.

The sea will always be superior to land for transporting goods to their markets (Norman, 1913). This concept has provided a rationale for a powerful navy since sea line of trade is comparatively low cost in economic terms, safe and advantageous in strategic perspective. Domestic prosperity required local industrial production and an overseas market and colonies for trade of goods and products. It would be a source of absolute advantage. In his academic works, he pronounced these merchant and military ships as main pillars of sea power. A strong naval force is necessary for the security and defence of merchant ships and overwhelming trade activities. A navy was simply the logical outgrowth of peaceful maritime trade and commerce (Norman, 1913). Therefore, Mahan's economic growth, naval capabilities and continuous geographic expansion were the foundations of sea power.

The theory outlines several principles and tactics that shape the strategies for maritime dominance. Some of the guiding concept that can be extracted from Alfred Thayer Mahan's strategy are described as under:

2.2.1 Geopolitical Importance of Controlling the Chokepoints

Mahan's main argument and point in its strategy emphasized the importance of geopolitically controlling the strategic chokepoints. The maritime routes and sea-lanes enjoy immense geostrategic significance for trade, commerce and energy security (Khan, Alam, & Shah, 2023). They have an ability to regulate the entire maritime traffic and movement. The

control of these maritime routes can allow the nations to control the entire regional strategy and help in exerting the influence on the political decision-making. Some chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz are important because a significant portion of oil and gas passes through it. These points are strategically important for energy security and any conflict or intervention can pave its way towards a catastrophe for the global market. These chokepoints are used for power projection and for denying access to the adversaries as well. Iran threatens the USA that any misadventure led by Israel or its western allies can lead to the closure of Strait of Hormuz for energy and trade. The dispute or conflict can escalate to a wide dimension and control of these choke points can serve as a bargaining chip and provide advantage on the enemy.

2.2.2 Strategic Concentration of Force

The strategic concentration of force refers to a particular assembly of naval force, weapons and assets including submarines, ships, aircraft carriers, missiles, guns and ammunition with defined strategy of deployment and execution. The fundamental reason for this concept is necessary for a naval warfare and achievement of particular objectives. It tactically serves as a tool of effective power projection over a particular maritime area and force multiplier by maximization of effectiveness of the force. The strategic concentration further ensures operational flexibility by quick deployment for decisive strike operations and strategic maneuvering by carrying out amphibious operations in the contested areas. The primary purpose of the entire strategy is to use the navy as a potent deterrent against adversaries and ensure superiority in the combat situation.

2.2.3 Naval Bases and Stations

The geostrategic location of naval bases and stations are important for several reasons. The strategic positioning helps in projecting power across the seas. They provide easy access to chokepoints and potential areas of conflict. The installation of naval bases and stations plays a vital role in controlling the waters, ensuring full spectrum deterrence and defence. The proximity of naval installations and assets increases the capability of swift response during the emergency and humanitarian crisis. They can further increase the tracking; surveillance and intelligence gathering facilitate timely reporting and counter external threats. They are believed to be the most critical component of the entire strategic framework ensuring the most credible deterrence and effective operationalization of national security.

i) Naval Superiority in War

Naval superiority in war contains enormous geostrategic importance due to the reason that it influences both events on both land and maritime fronts. The superiority enables the countries to control the Sea Lanes of Communications (SLOCs), project power in the region and global level and protect of national interests. The naval superiority increases the operational capability of amphibious operations that is necessary for combat power. The control of air and missile defence command and control systems is also very important to ensure protection and security of national interests. It is an important component of naval superiority. The naval superiority enables it to carry out offensive approaches in power projection and dealing with potential adversaries. The naval superiority upholds the international law and freedom of navigation.

ii) National Security and Defence

The geostrategic importance of national security is also an important aspect of sea power. It ensures safeguarding the sovereignty and national integrity of the country. The strong naval force can ensure that a country is capable of safeguarding its national interest against any external threat. It can give a potent response to any adversary encroaching on its territorial borders. The threat of strong response and a punitive counter strike can discourage the foreign aggression and conflict escalation at any level. The strong defence capabilities can ensure promotion of stability and peace in the region and this stability can foster sustainable economic development. Security is not only confined to war or conflict, rather it is also necessary for preserving national heritage and freedom from hostile influences of enemies.

iii) Technology and Innovation

Technology and innovation also have an important role to attain naval power. They help in exerting power and influence in the maritime domain. The modern technology has enabled navies to detect, counter and neutralize the threat from getting harm. The remarkable technological developments include stealth technology, precise ballistic and cruise missiles with sharp precision and guided technology, cyber warfare and UAVs. Besides these innovations, artificial intelligence, data analysis and surveillance systems have increased the power projection and Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA). The amphibious operations are becoming swifter and punitively affective. The underwater endurance of submarines has increased and the countries have attained submarine based second-strike capabilities. The area denial capabilities are improved and essentially helpful to disrupt the upcoming projectiles or other airborne units from targeting the strategic assets.

This theory has relevance with this research because India's rationale for the extension of naval capabilities is also on one side is for the expansion of trade and economic activities and secondly its security driven. Indian wants to develop a strong naval power to establish its hegemony against growing influence of China in the Indian Ocean, South China Sea and Malacca region.

2.3 Theory of Offensive Realism by Prof. John Mearsheimer

In international politics, offensive realists essentially follow Kenneth Waltz's argument that the causes of insecurity are to be found in the structure of international systems rather than in the nature of man or the state (Lim, 2014). However, the defensive realists like Kenneth Waltz assume that the gaining of maximum power is irrational for a state to become hegemony since the international system will punish them. However, unlike defensive realists, the offensive Realist scholars like John Mearsheimer believe on the opposite view that the state must maximize its material power as much as possible since it will make a positive strategic sense on the international system. Moreover, if these competitive environments suit the state must pursue the status of hegemon. The argument does not advocate that the thrust for domination is good in itself, rather it believes that since the international system is based on anarchy therefore having an overwhelming power is good for survival.

This problem is due to the insecurity and uncertainty in the international system. The first cause of insecurity lies in the fact that as "states interact in an anarchic environment without the protection offered by an overarching authority" (Elman & Elman, 1997).

According to Realism the international system is based on anarchy, therefore, the first assumption of offensive Realism is that states, international regimes and great powers are the main actors in the international system. Moreover, anarchy does not mean chaos, disorder or

turmoil rather it simply means the absence of central authority and an order that arbitrates above states, a state with absence of enforcer or hegemon (Finnemore & Goldstein, 2013).

The second assumption states that due to offensive military capabilities and doctrinal transformation each state has power to perpetrate and inflict harm to other states in the neighbourhood. This capability not only varies with respect to the deterrence capability of belligerent states but it also changes with the passage of time, moreover the deterrence policy prescribes preventive policies (Schweller, 2010).

The third assumption is that the states cannot assume the intentions of other states with respect to their national interests. The intentions of other states are unsure and unpredictable. It can never be predicted that other states will use maximum use of force to alter the balance of power in the region or a credible balance of power and status quo will be enough for them and they are not interested in using the force (Maoz & Gat, 2001).

Professor John J. Mearsheimer establishes his key arguments on the basis of extensive historical cases of USA, Germany and former Soviet Union. He states that the anarchy in the global system compels states towards aggression, the great powers seek to maximize their relative powers which is perquisite in the pursuit of attaining the status of hegemony (Mearsheimer, 2001). The states works vigorously to become the regional hegemony and prevent other states to reach such status by any means.

2.3.1 Understanding Power Dynamics

The offensive realism highlights the importance of power and it inherently seeks to maximize it to safeguard the national interests. The offensive realism is not necessarily recommended to prevent war rather it offers insights for maximization of power and

preemptive measures to safeguard the national interest by employing security strategies. This is due to the reason that Realism perceives the international system based on anarchy and this absence of overarching authority governing the relations among the states results in power struggle. This environment compels the states to rely upon themselves for their national security. Although the military size, weapons and capabilities does matter in the strategy, however, the dynamics of power are not confined to the military power rather economy; technology, diplomatic affairs and strategic positioning also play a vital role in it. These things collectively influence the behaviour of the state and its dealing with the belligerent situation. The states investing in economic development, research and technological advancements and establishing strong alliances with other states can better project power abroad. The dynamics of power are changing and the country that acts accordingly to advance in this field can better perform in the regional and international arena.

2.3.2 Preventive War

The preventive war is a main concept of offensive realism that is in line with the primary objective of theory's emphasis on power struggle and survival. The anarchic nature of the international system is a major cause of war and instability and it can only be counterbalanced through certain imperative measures including balance of terror and preventive war doctrine. The strategy includes the preemptive measures to prevent belligerence through hard means. This is a helpful policy option in an anarchic driven situation that results in a security dilemma. The states that have adopted an offensive realist approach are aspirants of maximization of power and prioritize military projection. The preventive war is aimed to counter and neutralize the perceived threat before the threat itself carries out any strike or

strength itself for any deliberate attack. They delay in neutralizing the threat and can provide it a space to get strength.

2.3.3 Force Projection

Force projection is the fundamental concept and main objective of adopting offensive realism. In Prof. John Mearsheimer's conception of Offensive realism, the force projection is the state's ability to deploy and sustain its military capabilities beyond its borders. The primary objective of this force projection is to influence foreign policy decision making of regional states. The projection helps in attaining deterrence stability against potent enemies. The force projection can help in balancing and bandwagoning by aligning with the stronger country to attain deterrence. The countries join security alliances and sign treaties to attain power. The alliance system and modernization of military capabilities help in working with special focus on the strategic vulnerabilities. The internal and external environment of a state is always under strategic competition and the force projection ensures the maximization of security internally and regionally.

2.3.4 Arms Race and Nuclear Deterrence

The offensive realism suggests that the tactical and strategic pursuit of power can be attained through arms race and nuclearization. The foreign relations of the states are fundamentally security driven and all the states are always in a pursuit of maximization of its firepower and military buildup. The advance military buildup is attained through technological advancement, economic sustainability, foreign import and indigenously established factories. The competition has led to the security dilemma for the states having longstanding potential adversaries with each other. The countries opt for proliferation of highly lethal and punitive weapons for their defence and power projection purposes. The foundations of nuclear

deterrence theory are based on Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and they play a role of most potent source.

2.3.5 Regional Hegemony

The offensive realism suggests that regional hegemony holds significant importance for the maximization of power of state. Regional hegemony is important for safeguarding the national interests of the state. The major outcome of regional hegemony is to ensure security of the state. The attaining of regional hegemony ensures the dominance in a particular geographical space and shaping the geostrategic landscape of the region. It directly affects the entire security environment of a particular geographical space. The hegemon in a region can ensure security and control of external threats. The regional hegemon can truly exercise power projection beyond its borders and influence the entire political discourse. This power projection is primarily aimed to safeguard its vital national interests from potential adversaries. It further helps in preventing adversaries and war-like situations. A hegemon state can enjoy the advantage of forming alliances, controlling resources and strategic decision making in the region. They can serve as a force multiplier. They can also help in setting norms, rules and standards for regulatory frameworks and discourage steps that can jeopardize the security environment of the region. The regional hegemony in overall proposes that it is a means of stability, sustenance and prevent rivalry. The states aspiring to attain the status of regional hegemony attempts to consolidate dominance, power and influence in the immediate neighbourhood.

2.3.6 Flexible Response

The offensive realist scholars believe that the international system is based on uncertainty and unpredictability. Therefore, in such a strained environment, the state has to

maintain a flexible response to ensure survival, rational geopolitical response and balance of power. In pursuit of maintaining balance of power and ensuring credible deterrence in the internal system, the states take responsible and calculated measures to ensure their security. The major powers of the world often pursue advanced arrangements by strong conventional muscle and limited nuclear options to achieve their strategy objectives. They help in preventing the potential adversaries from any misadventure or aggression. However, these options can sometimes inadvertently threaten the national interests of other states and can lead to miscalculation. The flexible and calculated response with rationalization of security options can reduce the provoking and escalation among the adversaries. This research can be explained in the context of offensive realism because military power is core of this theory. The countries employ several strategies to augment their military power and this maximization is not for the purpose of defense rather it is for flexing the muscle in the region. Since India is aspiring to be a great power in the region, therefore it is also increasing its military strength. Besides India's land border to the north with China and now sea border to the south is gradually becoming a new arena of military and power struggle with China. Moreover, after Pakistan credible deterrence capability in land and air has compelled India to challenge Pakistan in the maritime domains.

Chapter-3:

3. The Indian Ocean in Mahan's Maritime Doctrine: Theoretical Insights and Application

Introduction

In pursuance to the basic principles of Alfred Thayer Mahan's doctrine of sea-power, the strategic and historical importance of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is established. The Mahan's concept of sea power states and advocates that the sea power can be attained by controlling the seas lines of communication and also the strategic chokepoints. The point helps in understanding the region's geostrategic significance in reshaping the geostrategic dynamics in the broader perspective. The Mahan's conception of sea power is deeply rooted in controlling and influencing the sea roots of communication in the trade, economic, commerce and geostrategic perspectives. Mahan strongly stresses that controlling the strategic choke points can increase the nation's ability to project power.

3.1 .Geo-Strategic Significance of the IOR

The IOR plays a vital role in shaping the international trade, history and dynamics of maritime struggle. Historically, this region is a center of geopolitical interests of the major powers of the world. Its significance can be observed from different historical events during the past centuries. It has been a crossroad of civilizations during the past civilization which actively transported goods like spices, textiles and precious metals to European markets. During the rise of silk route, it became an important extension of this trade, later the Indian and Sri Lankan spices were in great demand in the European market. During the colonial period, the European countries controlled its lucrative trade route and rich resources. In the 16th century, Portuguese were the first to establish their dominance in the strategically

important parts of IOR including in the coastal cities like Malacca (Malaysia), Goa (India) and some parts of African coastal cities. They were followed by Dutch, who have also established their bases in Southeast Asian coasts and some parts of Africa. Later in the 18th century, British came to India and other littoral countries of IOR and captured Ceylon city of Sri Lanka, Singapore, India and other strategically important parts of South Asia for exploiting the riches and controlling the geostrategic coasts of IOR.

During World War I & II, the British Royal Navy and British Imperial Navy had conflict in the IOR for capturing the strategically significant chokepoints. The Japanese Imperial Navy, Allied Forces, Soviet and Chinese navies have also fought deadly battles in the pursuit of dominating the Strait of Malacca, Aden and other key positions. The conflict in the IOR did not stop after the end of World War II, rather it continued during the Cold War between the Soviet Union and the United States. Now, new actors like China and India have emerged in this theater of war and struggle. The Indian Ocean Region has great significance as a vital hub of water used for economic, energy resources, trade corridor and economic sustainability. It is also significant with respect to strategically important chokepoints including the Strait of Malacca, Bab el-Mandeb and Hormuz Strait. The IOR is the world's busiest trade route connecting the major economic poles of the world. The disruption on key maritime trade routes can affect the global economy and trade sustainability as 90 percent of the world's trade is carried out from sea lanes of communication. (Willige, 2024). Therefore, any type of conflict can affect the global trade flow among Africa, Middle East, Asia, Australia and Europe.

The Indian Ocean Region has a very rich history and archives world's famous trade routes among the countries whose shores were washed by the Indian Ocean. Cities on the

shores have sustained deep forms of material, intellectual and cultural exchange, so that the denizens of these ports had more in common with each other than with their fellow inland (Lavery & Hofmeyr, 2020). The trades have long been done and the history is stretched over thousands of years and these trades have always been powered by the winds of the Monsoon winds. These winds have long shaped the rhythms of life and added new patches of colours to the multicoloured shores of the Indian Ocean. Additionally, the IOR is also very important with respect to important natural resources including, natural gas, oil and minerals. Furthermore, it is also significant with respect to the flow of energy through this corridor. The highest tonnage of the world's goods including 65% of world oil, and 35% of gas is naturally located in the littoral countries of the IOR, therefore it is exported through this passage. The IOR is a hotspot in the international arena due to its significance with respect to natural resources and especially the transportation of energy. The modern geopolitics has turned the IOR into a new center of gravity for the struggle for power dominance. As the global power dynamics are witnessing a seismic shift and it's for sure that the 21st century belongs to Asia, as this region is home to the thriving economies of the world (Imtiaz N. , 2024). Due to the economic importance of the region, the area is under the geopolitical sway of world powers including the USA, China, Russia, Europe and India.

3.2 Key Maritime Chokepoints

The maritime choke points are narrow passages in the global lanes of communications which have significant geostrategic significance with respect to international trade, security and maritime movement. The global and trade impact can be understood that they are crucial for the transportation of goods, energy transportation and other likely commodities. Throughout the global, around 200 canals or straits are present, however, only few are termed

as chokepoints, which derive their strategic significance from the fact that their closure can stop the sea traffic carrying millions of tons of oil per day (Jahangir, 2020). Their geopolitical importance can be understood from the strategic control and their position as a potential flashpoint of conflict. Most of the strategic choke points are significant in a number of ways and reasons due to their indispensability for global trade and economic stability. The countries with naval capabilities intend to ensure their naval presence for the unimpeded maritime movement. Here are three strategically most important maritime chokepoints in the Indian Ocean Region.

3.2.1 The Strait of Malacca

The Strait of Malacca is one of the most geostrategically the most significant waterways in the globe. It is on the basis of geopolitical considerations and also with respect to trade. It is geographically located between the Malay Peninsula and the Indonesian Island of Sumatra. This waterway connects the Indian Ocean with the Pacific Ocean and serve as an important shipping and trade route for goods and energy. It is an efficient and easy passage for movement between the two most significant oceans and connects the Europe with Africa and Asian countries with such a lucrative trade route. It is geostrategically significant for the regional economic powers as well as a substantially important strategic point for China and the United States as well. China wants to secure its energy supplies for its rapidly booming industrialization and energy needs, whereas the United States is also wants to secure its vital national interests in the region due to strait's proximity with the busiest trade route and important countries. China is concerned about the threats pertaining to Malacca dilemma, which is possibility that the US or Indian navies would blockade or substantially interdict

China's Indian Ocean Sea lines of communication (SLOC) beyond the Strait of Malacca (and other regional chokepoints) (Myers, 2023).

3.2.2 The Bab el-Mandeb

Bab el-Mandeb (known as "Gate of Tears") is another strategical significant choke point on the Indian Ocean Region, which is believed as a narrowest strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, it also connects the Suez Canal. The narrowest span are measured as approximately 20 miles and Djibouti is located on its western side whereas Yemen is situated on the eastern side. This chokepoint has been a point of conflict and strategic importance for centuries because it connects the Indian Ocean to the Mediterranean Sea, with very narrow channels for maritime shipments. In 2023, Iranian backed Houthis seized the car carrier *Galaxy leader* travelling from India to Turkey, which was operated by a Japanese company, flies a Bahamian flag but is owned by Ray Shipping, a British company that is partially owned by an Israeli businessman (Mallick, 2024). The incident reflects the geopolitical importance of this strait. This is one of the most important seaborne trade routes which has been victim of this century's deadliest military campaign led by Israel and its western allies and on the other side Hamas is being backed by Iran and its proxies in the Middle East (Ghaddar, 2023). Houthis are consistently attacking the cargo ships which are operated by Israel or its western allies and it has affected globally. This disruption has led to the usage of alternate routes making voyages longer and costly.

3.2.3 Strait of Hormuz

The Strait of Hormuz is sandwiched between Oman and Iran and it is stretched only to 34 kilometers (21 miles) wide at its narrowest point and shipping lane is only 3 kilometers wide in either direction (Hussain R. S., 2020). The Hormuz Strait is one of the busiest oil transit

routes. Right between the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman, the hook-shaped waterway between Iran and Oman known as Strait of Hormuz lays acting as the flashlight of global geo-strategic politics (Jahangir, 2020). The United States being the sole “Hegemon” after the disintegration of the Soviet Union wants to dominate such strategically important choke point by dominating with all its might. So is the case with the Middle East, where it is firmly holding the position by deploying an aircraft carrier to keep the entire region under strict surveillance and control. This Strait is significant with respect to world’s three major oil producing countries including Iran, United Arab Emirates and Oman which have complex relations of interdependency with respect to their relations with the United States due to convergence of national interests.

3.3 Applying Mahan’s doctrine to the IOR

3.3.1 The Rise of China’s “String of Pearls” and its Pursuits of Naval Influence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR)

The Chinese “String of Pearls” refers to its geostrategic ambitions for the development of a huge network of seaports in South Asia, Southeast Asia, Middle East, Africa and other littoral countries of the Indian Ocean Region. It aims to establish a huge network of ports with infrastructural upgradation of strategic ports and other infrastructures flexing its muscle from its mainland to the far-sighted ports of the Indian Ocean Region. Following the classical geopolitical theories of Nicholas Spykman and Alfred Mahon, China apparently tries to use the periphery (rimland), going through the Asian and African coastlines to gain a dominant foothold in Afro-Eurasia and from there - into the rest of the world (Bozhev, 2019). This rapidly increasing influence has raised great concerns among the countries with adverse national interests with China including India and the United States. They perceive this development as

China's ambitions to dominate the entire IOR and beyond. This development is not confined to economic and infrastructural development; rather China has rapidly modernized its naval capabilities by commissioning the advanced aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines and other naval arsenals for a more robust presence ensuring its national security. As soon as the Chinese influence in the region will grow, the IOR will see more complex geopolitical dynamics which change in alliance systems and arms race in the region.

3.3.1 India's "Look East" Policy and its Quest for Dominance in the Region

India's "Look East" policy encompasses several principles and strategies which are aimed to increase its geopolitical influence in the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean Region. The policy is aimed to increase Indian influence in the Indo-Pacific and the Indian Ocean Region. The primary purpose of introducing this policy was to bolster India's economic and political influence in the blue waters. Later the policy has tilted towards the strategic context of the engagement at multilateral levels. The Sino-US conflict has raised India as a natural ally to the United States. Relations between both countries flourished during the George W. Bush administration, and India's strategic importance was a core element in Obama's 'rebalancing to Asia'. During the current Trump administration, India will remain a key partner for the US's continued efforts to project strength in the region (Gaens & Ruohomaki, 2017). The Indian geopolitical and economic relations with the eastern countries and littoral countries of the Indian Ocean Region under project SAGAR and Monsoon are a signpost of its rivalry with China. The relations are not solely based on the basis of economic integration rather they revolve around geostrategic posturing and defence oriented.

3.3.3 The Role of United States and NATO in the Indian Ocean based on Mahanian Principles

The role of the United States and NATO in the Indian Ocean Region is based on Mahanian principles and it aims to control the strategic choke points for their economic and geopolitical dominance. The theory advocates that for sustainable economic growth and significant maritime dominance, it is important to establish naval presence in the strategically important maritime trade routes and key points. The control of the sea routes and military presence can help in wielding power and influencing important decision making. Mahan suggested that naval power serves as a defensive and offensive deterrent. The US and its military allies and partners, including India, are trying to constrain China with different levels of counter-mechanisms, which include internal balancing, bilateral to quadrilateral groupings, and consortiums for customized military equipment (Paul, 2023). This is the reason why the United States has heavily invested in the Navy and established sophisticated naval ships, aircraft carriers and strong naval bases. The United States is enhancing its tendencies in collaboration with NATO allies against the opponent countries including China and Russia. The United States wants to contain China in the Indo-Pacific and the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and expect Australia and Japan to work as a counter deterrent force in the region, meanwhile NATO will work as a reinforcement for the US on the frontlines.

Chapter-4

4. India's Maritime Strategy by 2035: Rationale

The maritime strategy is the nation's predominant plan for utilizing its naval capabilities for the expansion of its vital national interests. The maritime strategies are centuries old, the different empires in history have set certain policies, objectives and strategized certain plans to expand their national interests. It has always been ensured essentially not codified though, however deliberated in the political and foreign policy of the countries. However, almost 125 years ago a famous naval officer and maritime strategist Alfred Thayer Mahan emphasized the significance of sea power during wartime. Sir Julian Corbett theoretically endorsed the theory by deliberating the strategy of establishing the control of sea in conflict situations. It is proposed in the strategy that the country controlling the strategic choke points can dominate the situation. In the past, the strategies of war have not necessary been deliberated separately from the traditional political and foreign policy context. However, the conceptualization of strategy was thoughtfully deliberated after the works of Carl von Clausewitz and Antonio Henri Jomini, nevertheless their works did not mainly focus on maritime strategy (Bartholomees, 2012). They mostly focused on the general military strategies; however, they have theoretically strategized the instant doctrines.

On the other hand, the naval doctrine is the strategy and guidelines that states how a navy operates, defends, combat and organizes operations in the light of its vital objectives. The naval doctrines are always more precise, clear and operationally focused on the basis of certain principles and tactical grounds. The countries have different concepts, objectives and aims for deterrence, power projection and controlling the sea lanes of communication which they strategize according to the available naval assets and environment. Therefore, in a very brief

and constructive way it can be assumed that basically the naval doctrine is the document which provides the answer for “how-to” operate in a particular framework.

In pursuant to India’s new wave of doctrinal transformation and India has modernized its military doctrines in envy for changing the deterrence stability of South Asia. India’s aspirations have changed the strategic discourse of the entire region. The country attaining weapons, equipment and strategic capabilities more than its credible defence is explained in the context of offensive realism. It imitates that the country aspires to supersede others in the offensive military capabilities. The theory falls under the offensive realism of John J. Mearsheimer and realist approach of Chankya Kautliya, Hans J. Morgenthau, Hobbes and Machiavelli.

4.1 Rationale of Indian Maritime Strategy

India is indeed one of the largest littoral countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). IOR connects the region’s most important and strategically significant countries. Moreover, throughout history the maritime trade routes have always been an area of struggle and rivalry among the competitors. The countries contested for their survival and securing of their vital national interests. The Indian Ocean connects Asia, Africa with significantly important ports with a huge maritime traffic of around 100,000 vessels per annum and out of which around one third is the cargo ships. They move crude oil and other commercial commodities from one part of the world to the other. The oil flow from the Persian Gulf region increases the significance by making it one of the important energy corridors. It has augmented the global importance of this oil route because the per annum oil flow is more than one trillion US dollars. It made this region the spotlight of global media and the major powers of the world has always preferred to ensure their strategic presence in the region by any means. The region is under

great influence from China and United States, also not reluctant to the gradually changing strategic equation. China is rapidly modernizing its naval capabilities to control the IOR and South China Sea. India is financially a big market and its foreign trade volume is increasing. The most of its trade is carried out through seas; therefore, New Delhi is committed to give maximum focus to its maritime trade routes. Whereas, in the pursuit of becoming a regional strongman has also started modernizing its navy and transforming it into a steadfast force to counter China and to hover Pakistan.

The maritime power and the naval power are not synonyms in their true sense; the second one is part of the first one. In fact maritime strategy includes all the factors that are necessary for a country to become a maritime power. They include the country's ship building capabilities, orientation of the government to operationalize maritime trade and also ensure security of the sea lanes of communications by safeguarding the coastlines and littoral. The Indian Ocean Region is one of the most critical and arguably the most important trade routes as compared to the Pacific and Atlantic. This is due to the longstanding conflict among the regional and global powers to contain China and other countries. Even the United States is sandwiched in this power struggle. There are a number of strategically important chokepoints and ports that are at the spotlight of this great game including Myanmar's Kyaukpyu port, Sri Lanka's Hambantota and Pakistan's Gwadar port and beyond (Khuhro Z. , "In the middle", 2023).

4.1.1 Maintaining Hegemony in the Indian Ocean Region and Beyond

The Indian Ocean Region (IOR) is a strategically important and significant trade route of the world. It is one of the most important energy corridors and the strategically imperative chokepoints of the world are present there. These are used as energy transit routes. The IOR is

given exceptional geostrategic importance due to its close proximity with the world's most important chokepoints including Bab-el-e-Mandeb, Strait of Malacca and Strait of Hormuz. The Bab-el-e-Mandeb is another important point that connects Africa, Asia and the Suez Canal. Most of the goods and commodities are moved from Asia to Europe through this particular route. The "Strait of Malacca" is a place that connects Southeast Asia with Northeast Asia and due to consistent conflict in this area the place is called the "Malacca Dilemma" (Shaikh, 2024). This is due to the reason China is an emerging economic giant and China is increasingly depending on sea-lanes of communication for foreign trade. In this regard, Strait of Malacca is the place from where the majority of the transportation of energy and goods is taking place.

Indian maritime strategy is driven from a number of key factors including geopolitical considerations, economic imperatives, energy security and technological advancements. It has a strategic rivalry with China that it considers an archrival that hinders rapidly expanding Indian influence in the IOR. India is growing its economic and strategic relations with the littoral countries of IOR. The Indian Ocean's strategic positioning and its accessibility to Strait of Malacca, Strait of Hormuz, Persian Gulf and Africa brings this region into the limelight and keeps it relevant to the geopolitics of the world. Indian traditional maritime strategic thinking has evolved during the past two decades. They have reoriented their maritime dimensions and made their navy more tilt towards expansion. Initially, India focused on dominating the entire South Asian region by its military capabilities. In the twenty-first century, the strategic landscape of IOR has changed due to the emergence of China, Pakistan, Japan and ASEAN. Although Pakistan's current naval capabilities are based only on averting and defensive, however, China is a serious threat for India. However, India's strategic position and peninsula character gives it a preponderant level of influence on the region.

The Indian elites see India's objective of becoming the great power is directly linked and connected to its maritime strategy. It is believed that a strong navy is vital for the exaltation of India's status as a great power. The political elites have commented on the matter at different occasions. The former Foreign Minister of India, Mr. Parnab Mukherjee stated,

“after nearly a millennia of inward and landward focus, we are once again turning our gaze towards outwards and seawards, which is the natural director of view for a nation seeking to re-establish itself, not simply as continental power, but even more so as a maritime power, and consequently as one that is of significance on the world stage” (Mukherjee P. , 2007).

India intends to achieve its supremacy and hegemony in the Indian Ocean Region. It has the largest population among other nations on the IOR, vide geographical space, strong military capabilities and a big economy by which India is rapidly advancing in the geopolitical space. India wants to utilize its geostrategic location, tangible and intangible factors to achieve the major power status in the IOR. The Indian political and military elites think that India ought to be the only major power of the IOR. They think that India ought to be the sole authority of the Indian Ocean as the Ocean and the state share the same nomenclature. Moreover, a century old American Naval Officer and Strategy theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan stated that whoever controlled the Indian Ocean Region will control the entire Asia. The 21st century is witnessing its practical manifestation in a way that all the major countries of the world including India itself is in the pursuit of dominating the IOR (Hussain J. , 2024)

A maritime power truly means a political, military and economic power that can influence others in the strategic affairs of the region. In the pursuit of making the Indian navy, a strong force in the Indian Ocean has increased its budget. The Indian naval budget increased from 2001-2005 by 5%, whereas from 2006-2009 it increased by 10%. If we compare this

increase from 11% to 18% from 1990 to 2008. It is a huge increase in the annual budget that changed the entire force structure and its weapon capabilities. In 2008, the Indian navy announced the commissioning of around 3 aircraft carriers, 160 ships and 400 naval aircrafts by 2022 to turn the Indian navy into a stronger force in the blue waters (Maqsood, 2017).

4.1.2 Countering the Increasing Influence of China

China was a regional power and now in the twenty-first century it is swiftly increasing as a great power of the world. The emergence of China to that status is relevant to India and other countries of the region whose national interests are linked to IOR. They have different political ideologies, strategic perceptions, aspirations and foreign policy objectives that are assumed in the light of their national interests. Both countries share a huge portion of their land border and use the Indian Ocean Region for trade and security purposes. The Sino-Indian war of 1962 is a significant event in their foreign relations and it would be inappropriate to characterize the relations by avoiding this even. However, the entirety of these relations is not based on this episode, however this conflict and later the recent Sino-Indian border skirmishes in the Ladakh region has haunted the entire region. It was an armed conflict that took place along their borders and during this conflict a series of heavily armed clashes led to a huge number of casualties and deaths. The Chinese forces managed to push the Indian forces back to their theaters and captured their claimed area. In the backdrop of these hot pursuits, the Indian Ocean Region became the second theatre of war and gravity of its conflict increased after the incident of 9/11 and epic modernization of maritime strategy. China started to give much importance to the PLA (Navy) and increased its naval presence in the IOR.

China's recent massive project "One Belt and One Road (OBOR)" is one of the examples of its immense economic development project. In this project, China intends to invest

over \$3 trillion in 68 different countries for infrastructural development and modernization of their roads and seaports (Farr, 2017). This is a kind of China's politics of ports or diplomacy of ports that has engaged many countries for business purposes. The main purpose is to reactivate the traditional silk route in modern times, a route that flourished and functioned during the Han Dynasty. China is a huge economy and from 2020, 60 percent of its oil and 30 percent of natural gas will be imported (Speed, Liao, & Dannreuther, 2014). The secure supply of its energy needs is a substantial challenge to its foreign policy objective because China has a huge industry that requires energy to function properly. China is a huge consumer of energy and its demands are rising rapidly due to expansion of its industries. Consequently, its economy and energy needs have increased to a degree that they have started influencing its politics and foreign policy decision making. Most of its trade and energy needs are fulfilled by IOR. However, on one side its increased involvement in the energy market is seen as a stabilizing factor in the global energy regimes and a source of interdependence. At the same time, India perceives it as a threat because China is using the Indian Ocean region as a route for this energy supply and it will warrant the security of this region by ensuring its excessive naval presence.

The military presence provides China an edge in the security driven situation and it provides a stake in the decision-making. In 2014, China responded quickly and strongly when a crisis and emergency emerged in Male and in Maldives. It provided required assistance swiftly to deal with the situation. China provided a huge amount of financial assistance to provide infrastructure upgrade, the excessive lending raises questions that whether Maldives will ever be in a position to repay the debt or fall in complete control of Chinese influence. The political advantage in their policies will be increased as China intends to develop "a string of pearls", a chain of China's military installations in the region and Maldives will be an

important camp (Kumar & Stanzel, 2018). Although previously India has played as peacekeeper in Maldives during the presidency of Abdullah Yameen. China has quickly and swiftly provided its technical assistance, crew to Malaysian Airlines flight MH370 crisis that was planned to fly from Kuala Lumpur international airport, Malaysia to its planned destination at Beijing Capital international airport, China. However, it was accidentally fell down in the Indian Ocean (kelly, 2023). In 2015, China evacuated 225 citizens of its own and foreign nationals from Yemen during the Saudi led “Operation Decisive Storm” which led the country into political instability and turmoil (Panda, 2015).

China has gradually provided a key aspect of establishing its commitment to physical presence. The physical military presence provides China a credible role to perform in the region and influence the geopolitics. The military presence and strategic positioning shall provide China an edge to operate and sustain in the region. Beijing has been eyeing the islands sprawled across the sea-lanes and lines of communication to African in the western Indian Ocean: the Seychelles, Comoros, Mauritius and Madagascar (Mohan, "China's Two-Ocean Strategy Puts India in a Pincer", 2022). China intended to deepen its diplomatic relations with these nations to lay their feet in the Indian Ocean. Although China has a long presence in the Comoros, since it has developed its military base in Comoros, a strategically important country of the Indian Ocean Region. In fact, in 1975, China was the first to recognize this country to establish its footnotes in the Indian Ocean.

Although China is recognized as a new player in the IOR, it is gradually increasing its interest and presence in the ocean. China has developed strong economic and strategic relations with the coastal countries that trade from IOR. China's IOR centric geo-strategy and focus can be understood from its relations with the littoral countries. It has opened an embassy in each

of the six countries of Indian Ocean Region (IOR) including Sri Lanka, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Madagascar and Comoros (Baruah D. M., 2023). However, the traditional world powers do not have any embassies or diplomatic relations with those countries. It reflects that China want to be more relevant and engaged in the countries located on the IOR.

4.1.3. India Changed its Strategy from using the Seas to Securing the Seas

During October 2015, India published its latest naval doctrine titled as “Ensuring Secure Seas: India’s Maritime Security Strategy”. This naval doctrine or strategy is a revised version of India’s previous naval strategy which was titled as “Freedom to Use the Seas and was published back in 2007. Now, the title of the latest Indian naval doctrine itself reflects that India has advanced the scope of its naval strategy and aimed to expand it to the next level. They want to dominate the region by making the Indian Ocean as India’s Ocean. The geostrategic realities of this region have changed in the past decades and new factors have taken place. China has rapidly emerged and western attention towards the IOR as an energy corridor has increased the global factors in the foreign policy and strategic decision-making. India’s revised maritime strategy meets with the modern needs of its maritime interest; it shall provide India a status of net security provider in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. The infrastructure modernization reflects that Indians aspire to attain the status of net security provider in IOR (Bhattacharya, 2024).

The changing maritime strategy and paradigm shift in South Asia is compelling India to reorganize its naval doctrine and secure its naval interests by making strong decisions. This time India has managed to formulate a comprehensive and vast strategy which encompasses almost all the required procedures India shall adopt in pursuit of its vital maritime objectives.

It also provides an explicit picture which reflects India's futuristic vision for this IOR. There can be three main points that can be derived from this strategy.

First, accepting the word "Indo-Pacific" at governmental level in their maritime security strategy. Although the term has numerous disparities and distinctions; however, the terms refer to the western pacific and Indian Ocean (Bhatia, 2023). The region that is at the spotlight of global geostrategy and reflects the signs of the emerging theater of war. The referred concept has also been recognized and referred to in their strategic discussions and documents of other regional countries including Australia, United States, Japan and member countries of ASEAN. This is due to the reason that the world focus has been shifted from Euro-Atlantic to the Indo-Pacific and its significance as an energy corridor has compelled the regional as well as global powers to engage in the new power game in the IOR. New Delhi is obstinately focused and eagerly expanding its strategy in the IOR to increase its strategic role. Wherein, the other regional countries including Australia, Japan, Indonesia and some other ASEAN countries observe eager attitude of India in its expansionist designs. Although they are concerned about Indian intentions, due to India's huge size and rapidly expanding maritime strategy, they are unable to ignore its significance and relevance in the region.

Second, India's primary and secondary areas of interest are gradually expanding. India in its previous naval doctrine has elaborated its primary and secondary areas of interests that are changed in the later documents (Baruah D. , 2015). This is aimed to ensure the expanded role of the Indian navy in the IOR. The far-flung areas like Red Sea were previously pronounced as secondary areas of interest for Indian maritime strategy, however, in the new strategy it has become the primary area of interest. Moreover, the other littoral regions of Africa and Suez Canal, especially the Gulf of Oman, the Gulf of Aden, were previously

described as secondary areas of interest whereas, now they are placed under the primary areas of interest. Furthermore, the South China Sea, Mediterranean Sea and littoral regions of western Africa are now claimed as secondary areas of interest. While on one side, India is countering China in the IOR but even then it has avoided unnecessary engagement in the South China Sea and its reluctance in that region compelled ASEAN friends to show discomfort on its policy. This is due to the reason that ASAEAN countries are in a state of conflict in that region and other major powers including the United States, Russia, China and Japan are involved in the power struggle. They are attempting to dominate that part of the world.

Thirdly, the first two points result in deriving the third and main point that emerges from that strategy: that they create India's role as a net security provider. India is doing everything to attain its status as a net security provider in the IOR (Mishra, 2024). The Indian maritime doctrine itself conveys how India shall treat as a net security provider. It describes that a state can play all the roles of a security provider including mentor, contain and counter. The doctrine does not provide details of what net security provider can be assumed and how this status shall be attained and in how much time. However, it is sure that India is a maritime country and has force capability. It can influence other countries and help in maintaining a credible, stable and peaceful environment for other nations to flourish economically. This positive environment shall be good for transit trade for all in the region.

4.1.4 Nuclear Triad and India's Second-Strike Capability

The second-strike capability can be attained through sea based launching systems and, in this regard, nuclear submarines are considered as the most survivable leg of the nuclear triad / arsenal. This is due to the reason that the conventional submarines have less endurance due to refueling and charging of their batteries. However, the nuclear submarines are equipped with

a small nuclear reactor within their power generating system, less noise and ensure long endurance. During missions, they are less traceable and very difficult to be intercepted. The nuclear power submarines and the ballistic missile attack submarines both are lethal weapons with enhanced strategic and tactical capabilities. The triangular nuclear arms race between China, India and Pakistan are bringing the IOR into the threshold of nuclear conflict (Bashir, 2022).

In South Asia, the nuclear dimension of maritime strategy is a new phenomenon and it has followed the same path of reactive strategy as the land based nuclear program. China's stepping into the IOR has activated the Indian policy makers to follow suite. China commissioned a strong and modernized naval force in the IOR and India perceived it as a threat for its expansionist designs. Because of its nuclear deterrence calculations, it started rapid modernization and the Indian nuclear program has managed to attain a significant pace in the past three decades. However, during the past two decades the momentum is swift and the recent developments reflect that by 2035 it will be at its maximum.

In the increased Chinese naval presence, the definition of strategic stability for India is maintaining nuclear deterrence in the Indian Ocean Region that will also give India a chance of sea-based second-strike capability. Whereas, Pakistan's definition of security is envisaged in the concept of minimum credible deterrence vis-à-vis India. The nuclear arming of IOR reflects that in future any level of maritime conflict and adventurism can be turned into a full-scale nuclear escalation, since armed forces of all the three countries are equipped with nuclear weapons. India has launched four Arihant class submarines to the Indian Navy for its operational presence in the IOR. The INS Arighat, nuclear submarine of the same class was commissioned in 2020 just two months after the Sino-India territorial standoff in the Doklam

Platue. The Chinese military engineers attempted to build a road near the China and Bhutan border, which was interrupted by the Indian Army on request of the Bhutan government. The Chinese attempted to deepen its presence on the strategically significant border areas. The INS Arihant can carry 12 SLBMs with a range of 700 kilometers, whereas INS Arighat can carry 24 K15 missiles, which can target neither Beijing nor Islamabad. Therefore, they started manufacturing and arming the upgraded versions with modified target range, for instance, K-4 is said to have a range of 3,500 km, K-5 SLBM with a range of 5,000 km and K-6 with a reported range of 8,000 km (Afzal, 2020).

The Chinese government decided to counter Indian influence by providing two diesel electric attack submarines to Bangladesh and helping in developing a dock in Sri Lanka and in other neighbouring countries to maintain credible deterrence from Indian interventions. Moreover, China agreed to provide eight new diesel electric submarines to Pakistan and they are expected to be commissioned in the Pakistan Navy by 2028. This increased “submarine diplomacy” by the Chinese government is due to India and its engagement with the United States and other IOR nations for defence purposes.

4.2 India’s Evolving Maritime Strategy (2004-2015)

China’s continuous rise and modernization of its military especially the naval capabilities are changing the strategic balance in the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean Region. China is focused on those areas due to US intervention and wants to secure its trade routes. However, China is rapidly renovating strategy and naval presence in India’s areas of interest has perceived New Delhi that it can halt in flexing its muscle in the region. India is focused on growing and flexing its muscle in the region and ensuring its status as a regional

strongman. India has explicitly worked on moving out from foreign influence and gradually become the striving strongman in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond.

4.2.1 First Maritime Doctrine (2004), “Freedom of use of Seas-Indian Maritime Strategy”

In 2004, India published its first maritime strategy. The primary objective of formulation of this naval doctrine was to ensure the security of its sea. India is essentially a maritime nation and it has a coastline of around 7500 Km. Moreover, due to its massive foreign trade flowing through its water compelled India to develop a comprehensive doctrine ensuring the “Freedom of use of seas-Indian Maritime Military Strategy”. This strategy enabled India to focus on bringing Indian Ocean Region (IOR) on increasing focus of Indian policy makers (Singh & Sen, 2024). Likewise, it enabled the Indian policy makers to observe that IOR can be used strategically not only to increase the volume of trade but also it is used as a trade route of global trade. It affects and influences the geopolitics regionally and as well as globally. The dawn of 21st century has further brought this route into the limelight and global attention. The doctrine remained essentially confined to India’s commitment to securing the seas for trade and merchant activities. It proposed maritime cooperation among the littoral countries for promoting regional stability through close connectivity.

4.2.2 Second Maritime Doctrine (2007), “the Constable”

The second model of Indian Maritime modernization describes India’s increased role in the IOR as “the Constable”. Holmes, Winner and Yoshihara have offered a historical and systematic analysis of how many countries have either renounced the seas or reduced their role in the waters, however India has gradually resumed its naval focus (Holmes, Winner, & Yoshihara, 2009). They have described the maritime strategy with its special focus on both

China and India. India formulated the naval doctrine in a way to play its role as a regional “policeman”, only keeping an eye on the entire region. The countries which empower their military and strategic capabilities to halt the external influence in their territorial waters and do not let their shores fall under the control of external elements fall in that category. This is how other countries have also adopted their maritime strategies to counter external influence either individually or by developing a regional alliance. Iran has indigenously and with the help of Russia and China modernized its Navy in the Persian Gulf to repel US influence, whereas Association of South Asian Nations (ASEAN) has developed a regional alliance to counter China and United States in their waters and safeguards their national interests in the South China Sea region.

India has formally moved into the “policeman” or “Constable” mode when it adopted a new Naval Doctrine in 2009, called “Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian maritime security strategy”. They replaced the word doctrine with strategy and proclaimed to secure the waters in the Indian Ocean. It means now India was in the pursuit of securing the waters instead of only using them as defined in their previous naval doctrine. The doctrine was comparatively a more thoughtful document that described India’s future policies and plans. Therein, the waters adjacent to the Indian territory and seaports were pronounced as India’s primary areas of interest, whereas, the extensive and far-flung areas adjacent to Australia, Africa and middle east were marked as areas of secondary interests. It is clearly understandable that the presence of the Indian navy in the marked areas shall be subject to its strategic significance.

4.2.3 Third Maritime Doctrine (2015), “a Striving Strongman” in IOR and Beyond

The third model or level of maritime strategy is “the strongman” status in the region. A striving strongman, who never let any external navy to control its waters and influence its

national interests under any circumstance. It ensures in maintaining its writ in the primary areas of interests with all due obligation. The doctrine ensures India to counter balance and pose a threat to the stronger opponents like China. At the previous two stages of naval doctrine only allowed India to maintain surveillance, security and continue its regular trade in through the Indian Ocean Region, whereas the strategic role was very limited to be played in the region. It was simply a constructive and limited arrangement to keep the things going on. However, now India becomes comparatively in a better position to not only play a strategic role in the region but also to change the entire strategic dynamics in its interests. India's status has moved from "using the seas" to "securing the seas" level. Furthermore, by this India will attain credible second-strike capability during nuclear war. India has commissioned nuclear submarines in the IOR and increasing their number and increasing the numbers of their aircraft carriers.

4.2.4 Post-2015 Developments and Advancements

Firstly, according to the 22nd Indian Naval Chief, Robin Kumar Dhowan, the Indian Navy's worldview has shifted from "Euro-Atlantic to an Indo-Pacific" (Parachini, et al., 2022). India is re-posturing its naval, economic and geostrategic interests with tangible sources of its navy and concrete impact on its national interest. India intends to flex its muscle in the region and engage regionally with the "constable" role. It illustrates India's enhancement on its adjacent waters.

Secondly, in the previous Naval doctrine of 2009 India has marked the waters adjacent to the Indian Territory as their primary areas of interest the waters from Australia to Africa were claimed as the secondary areas of interest. Whereas, now in the revised naval doctrine of 2015, India enhanced its primary areas of interests by establishing strategic choke points in the Bay of Bengal, Strait of Hormuz, Strait of Malacca, Strait of Sunda, Strait of Lombok and

Strait of Ombai in the South-Eastern Asia and other likely areas were claimed as their primary areas of interest. Moreover, the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea were claimed as the secondary areas of interest.

Thirdly, the Indian role has been promoted as the net security provider in the entire region for regional and international trade. It offers to provide security to other regional stakeholders using IOR. In this connection, India is rapidly advancing its local weapon industry and developing technological advancements to get self-reliance and also accelerating the process.

4.3 Project SAGAR: Security and Growth for all in the Region

The project SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) is India's project aimed to provide assistance to the countries of IOR for regional integration and connectivity. The project was launched in May 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic that has drastically damaged the world economy.

4.3.1 SAGAR: Vision, Concept, Policy and Doctrine

Regional integration is the primary objective and key concept of the project Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR). The fractious and stubborn nature of maritime relations among the nations of Indian Ocean and Asia-Pacific is the future of international geopolitics today. China is focused on its seas for its maritime trade and modernized strategy in the South China and Indian Ocean Region. The strategic evolution is not limited to a single country; rather other regional countries including Japan have also changed their maritime posture from the post-World War two era and started engaging strategically. Russia is also realigning itself to engage strongly to safeguard its strategic interests in the Indian Ocean and

Persian Gulf region. Moreover, it has joined a strategic coalition with China for its future endeavors and this doctrinal transformation reflects Russia's doctrinal transformation. Indonesia has started enforcing its maritime capabilities by forming 'maritime axes' with the regional countries and advocated strongly on regional integration within the members of ASEAN. Australia is also hitting hard for regional engagement and employed effective diplomacy for establishing strong relations at multilateral levels.

Security and Growth for all in the Region (SAGAR) is India's maritime policy, doctrine to engage with the countries in the Indian Ocean Region for economic, and diplomatic relations. The policy is another important step for regional integration and engagement in recent years. In 2015, the policy was first introduced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and in June 2018 in a multilateral economic summit held in Singapore. PM Narendra Modi claimed that India is eager to encompass the region of Indo-pacific that is stretched from Asia to the shores of Africa and the shores of America are included. Narendra Modi has given special focus to strengthen the Navy for their expansionist designs. In pursuit of doing so India has also commissioned an advanced destroyer *INS Imphal* of Visakhapatnam class.

The basic concept of initiating this project is to get an advantage of the maritime or blue economy. The blue economy can serve as a strategy for the neighbouring countries to counter the economic challenges that they are facing. It can help in developing more intense connectivity and mutual relations. The more connectivity can also ensure tackling the challenges like disasters, piracy issues, human trafficking and drugs smuggling. The joint strategy can help in a better way to meet up the required tasks. In the 21st century, China started its CPEC initiative and started engaging with the neighboring countries on its politics of ports. China started constructing and modernizing ports of the countries of the Indian Ocean Region

to influence the region and to manage its huge economy. In this connection, it has introduced a string of pearls strategy and India wanted to counter this strategy by developing its own bilateral and multilateral relations with other nations of the Indian Ocean.

The vision of SAGAR can be elaborated under the following terms.

- i) **Security:** Improvement of littoral security to ensure safe coasts and maritime territories for trade and movement.
- ii) **Capacity Building:** the development of trade and strategic cooperation for smooth functioning of trade and up keeping the Security.
- iii) **Collective Action:** developing mutual relations on bilateral and multilateral level to halt criminal activities in the seas including piracy, terrorism and smuggling.
- iv) **Sustainable Development:** collective cooperation and collaboration can ensure sustainable regional developments.
- v) **Maritime Engagement:** the countries located on the distant shore with common economic, geostrategic and security driven interests also find a medium for engagement and find logical and peaceful settlements of disputes.

The most significant factor for India in the SAGAR initiative is that it gives India the central character and most essential role in the program. India has a big economy, largest population and strong naval power. It makes India the most capable maritime force that can deploy aircraft carriers, conventional and nuclear deterrent force in the Indian Ocean Region. This initiative provides India huge capability to use the entire Indian Ocean Region and influence the littoral countries in foreign policy decision making. Furthermore, regional integration helps in countering the global and regional powers. The Indian political elites have

recognized the reality and it have a firm belief that the maritime strategy is mandatory to attain political power.

4.3.2 Main Factors of SAGAR

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The main factors emerging from SAGAR are as follows.

i. Security

India has a huge coastline stretched to 6500 kilometers making India a maritime nation. Therefore, the maritime security of India starts from its own coastlines. The Indian claims that the terrorists responsible for the 26/11 Mumbai attacks were also entered in India through its coastlines. It raised the concerns of India to upgrade its maritime posture more significantly. The security can be ensured by monitoring every movement on the shores that is possible by installing Coastline Surveillance Network (CSN) by placing a number of sensors at important places. In 2012, India approved an Information Management and Analysis Center (IMAC) and was later operationalized in 2014 at Gurugram Air Force Station to monitor India's Coastline and island territories (Sen, 2020).

In 2017, the government founded the Island Development Agency (IDA) as an apex body to assess and take steps for the development of islands. The IDA has recently reviewed concept development and plans for the development of nine islands on Japan's government aid approximately ₹265, four at Andaman and Nicobar (Smith, Ross, Long and Avis) and five at Lakshadweep (Minicoy, Bangaram, Thinnakara, Cheriya and Suheli) (Baruah M. D., 2021). India is also planning to develop airports in Nicobar to attract tourism in the island and to increase its connectivity to the rest of the world.

The Indian navy presently operates more than 140 warships and 250 fighter aircrafts to maintain its strategic authority not only to its immediate coasts but also to the entire extent of the Indian Ocean Region. The Indian maritime perspective plan (2022-2027) shows that India is likely to strengthen its maritime posture by attaining the numbers of its warships to 175 and advanced aircrafts to 320 by 2027 (Pandit, 2018). India wants to increase its footprints in the Indian Ocean Region to ensure security and to win the confidence of regional states which have joined the SAGAR project.

ii. Capacity Building

Training is the core activity that ensures the capacity building of nations that helps in learning the strategy to face and counter challenges pertaining to economic, political, social, and environmental issues. The capacity building is linked to the analytical work and stems from the decision making in the crucial and challenging situations at intergovernmental levels and otherwise. India has established several institutions and organizations like Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme aimed for training the professionals of regional countries. ITEC is a huge project and covers more than 158 countries in the developing world like countries of Asia, Africa, Eastern and Central Europe, Latin America

and other Caribbean nations. The program provides relevant training pertaining to the needs of those nations including vocational, professional and technological training. Although the program is not only limited to address the training related to the SAGAR project. However, this project has truly been benefitted from it. In 2018, India has provided 1000 special slots to Maldives for such trainings with specialized budget.

The diplomats are trained under Foreign Service Institute (FSI) and security personnel are trained under Indian Academies. The diplomats of other closely connected nations also do benefit from these institutes by attending relevant courses and workshops. The Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) has undertaken several training for emergency sea operations of other countries like Malaysia and Mauritius for the subject exercise.

iii. Collective Action

A framework of collective action in the particular situation of conflict and emergency is important for the systematic handling of the emergency. The absence of a forum for collective action results in a security dilemma and challenging situation for the entire region or the stakeholders. The IOR lacks an availability of a robust mechanism to handle such stimulating situations. The region is strategically of high value; however, it does not have a significant security paradigm to ensure its safety. Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Indian Ocean naval Symposium (IONS) and Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) are the three regional initiatives that India is backing to ensure a forum for collective action. The project SAGAR has contributed a lot in the maritime governance in the IOR and has successfully provided a substantial policy option for security of the entire region (Schottli, 2019).

Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) is a regional regime that primarily ensures security measures and serves as an instrument of peace and security of the region. It is an intergovernmental organization established in 1997 with its main office in Mauritius. The IORA was originated during an official visit of the late president Nelson Mandela of South Africa to India in 1995, where he said:

“The natural urge of the facts of the history and geography should broaden itself to include the concept of an Indian Ocean Rim for socio-economic cooperation”
(Mandela, 1997)

The Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) is a volunteer initiative that seeks to increase multilateral cooperation among the nations whose shores are washed by the Indian Ocean. This offers an open forum for the discussion of regional issues among the littoral nations. It facilitates the flow of information among the nations that can be beneficial in maintaining the security in the broader perspective. Their collective dialogue also helps in finding the common resolution for the regional issues. In 2018, the 10 anniversary of IONS was celebrated and in the program speech, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi pronounced IONS as a catalyst for SAGAR and its in-line with India’s “Act East” policy. The program is aimed to mutually benefit from the Indian Ocean and facilitate each other. The program signified the geopolitical importance of the Indian Ocean and its centrality in politics.

Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) is a new regional economic corridor and an international organization of South Asian and Southeast Asian nations. In 1997, a new regional organization under the name BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation) was formed. Later in 1998, the group was renamed as BIMST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation). In 1998, Nepal became an observer and in 2004, Nepal and

Bhutan both became full members of the organization. India is vigorously working on such organizations to increase regional connectivity and economic integration for its strategic objectives, however avoiding Pakistan (Nizamani S. , 2022)

Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is also an important aspect of collective action. All the equipment, strategies and practices that ensure the maritime domain awareness for a country is mandatory for collective action. The sharing of intelligence is good for the security of the entire region. It helps in resisting and repelling the foreign interventions before they could bring any harm.

iv. Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is essential for economic growth and socio-political stability of a country. In simple words, sustainable development is a kind of development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the future. The ensuring of aspects of sustainable development is essential for every nation to maintain. The modern maritime nations cannot ensure sustainable development unless they are environmentally protected and they do not harm the natural life, inhabitants, animals and plants. The United Nations and other global regimes have proposed sustainable fishing practices, calculated exploitation of minerals and other materials from oceans and harnessing ocean technology.

All the coastal nations face several different challenges and work to sort the out. India is working to ensure two aspects of sustainable development; one is controlling climate change and protection from natural disasters. In 2004, India installed the Indian Tsunami Early Warning System (ITEWS) to sustain the minimum loss in any case of emergency. It became

operationally functional in 2007 and is currently operated by the Indian National Center for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) at Hyderabad.

v. Maritime Engagement

In the twenty-first century, the Indian Ocean Region has become a significant theatre of maritime engagement due to its unique geostrategic significance, proximity with the great powers and other regional and international implications. The region is rapidly becoming an important stage of geostrategic struggle. The Indian navy is also in a precondition to flex its muscle in the region. In the pursuit of increasing its influence in the region, it has broadened its strategic goals, presence and naval exercises in the IOR and beyond. Now, India carries out almost twenty naval exercises annually with the neighboring and friendly countries to keep its navy in a ready force posture. These exercises help in creating an atmosphere of trust among friendly nations and like-minded navies.

Indian Coastal Guards (ICG) also undertake naval exercises for mobilization in war like situations or to tackle maritime threats. The ICG mostly undertakes these exercises with Japan and other regional countries for naval drills (J, 2024). These naval drills are carried out under the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between the two countries back in 2006. These MoUs include high profile visits, trainings, joint exercises, courses and participation in the seminars arranged for maritime awareness among the people.

India has a mutual logistics agreement for the procurement of military equipment and weapons with the USA, France, Indonesia, Singapore and the Republic of Korea. It has further extended its agreements with Australia, United Kingdom and Russia for further support and supplies of that equipment.

vi. Regional Connectivity

The new dynamics for the strategic quest are emerging because the countries are regionally connecting with each other. South Asia is a crossroad of civilizations. Several economic corridors are emerging by the different regions of the world. All the countries are trying to increase their regional power by connecting with each other for economic integration. The Belt and Road Initiative and ASEAN are examples of this regional connectivity; it empowers the multilateral economic and political relations of the states. The Indian perception of regional connectivity is somewhat different from the Chinese one, whenever India sees regional connectivity for economic relations, in fact it wants to look outwards. Furthermore, this approach is not confined to the economic gains rather it aims for the strategic gains.

The Sagarmala Project is an example of Indian attempts for regional connectivity. This project is for the advancement in the logistic sector of the country. The idea is envisaged in unlocking and opening the potential coastal waterways, roads, railways, constructing Coastal Economic Zones (CEZ), developing industrial areas for the future. This is one of the heaviest projects of the Indian government that entails 8.5 trillion Indian rupees equal to US\$ 140 billion (G, 2023).

India has further explained its foreign policies priorities by neighbourhood first policy. India wants to engage with its immediate littoral neighbours for economic integration. The main purpose of this regional economic integration is to increase the economic potential and expansion of influence.

India's Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) is an initiative that is functioning in collaboration with Japan. The agreement was signed between India, Japan and some African

countries. AAGC's research and support unit is established in New Delhi, which comprises Research and Information System for developing Countries (RIS), Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and Institute of Developing Economics-Japan External Trade Organization (IDE-JETRO) (Chaturvedi, Prakash, & Dash, 2020). AAGC is completely a sea-based economic corridor unlike the OBOR that is both a sea and land based economic project.

4.4 Project MAUSAM

The project MAUSAM is the Modi administration's foreign policy initiative aimed to connect the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean Region using the common trade route for over centuries. The word "Mosam" is derived from the regional dialect of Monsoon winds that were used by the ancient sailors and mariners to travel in the ocean.

4.4.1 MAUSAM; Vision, Concept, Policy and Doctrine

The project MAUSAM is India's socio-cultural project that is aimed to connect the regional countries economically. The term "Mausam" means season or weather, the same word is being used in the Arabic language as well to denote the same meaning. The season signifies the particular season in which the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean had historically been connected with each other for trade and travel. It was a maritime cultural connectivity of around 39 countries of IOR. It reveals the economic, political, religious, cultural and strategic interaction of these countries through ages. Therefore, the fundamental objective of reactivating this project is on one side to increase the understanding of the regional culture and to reassert the regional connectivity in the broader perspective. However, in the strategic context it is aimed to counter OBOR of China and connect with other coastal countries.

This project is purposed to achieve few objectives. Firstly, it aims to revive the historical cultural connections that have been renounced over the period. The project will give the regional countries a more sense of connectivity and relativeness; moreover, it will increase the cooperation among the nations and minimize the conflicts.

Secondly, it wants to reactivate the historical archeological sites in the Indian Ocean Region because the regional countries possess common historical and archeological sites that have been renounced in the modern times. India is developing and reconstructing its archeological sites for tourism and increasing the scope of intermixing.

Finally, it also wants to reestablish cross-national world heritage nomination. It will advocate for flourishing the historical trade and tourism routes in the Indian Ocean Region that have been used for centuries. However, they are less active and used. It will sustain not only the cultural heritage but also ensure the sustainable economic development in the region.

4.4.2 Indo-Pacific Strategy entails Security for India

The Indo-pacific strategic alignment and this construct has attained considerable traction in the past two decades. The Indo-Pacific region accounts for more than 65 percent of global GDP, and half of all global trade passes through the waters of these two oceans (De, 2021). The Indo-Pacific strategy is remarkably persuasive and almost all the major powers of this region have employed a strategy to safeguard their national interests and spelled out doctrinal transformation in their engagement on the affairs. These regional architects are reshaping and remapping the entire region as per their own calculations. The regional and international tilt towards the info-pacific raises new concerns for India and its expansionist designs. It leads to a new phenomenal change that not only changes the strategic realignment but has also paved its way towards a new power struggle. This is due to the reason that the

Indian Ocean washes the shores of two big countries with huge industrial and economic authority equipped with strong military powers. Furthermore, the gravity of the industrial revolution has gradually shifted from Europe to America and later it reached Asia. The industrial revolution is swiftly bringing change in the paradigm shift due to the reason that since the 1980s Asia has outperformed Europe in many fields. The economic powers are rapidly emerging on the shores of the Indian Ocean and outnumbering the ocean with trade ships to America, Europe, Africa and the Middle East.

Although the main objective of this project is claimed as a cultural and enhanced social engagement, the strategic dimensions reflect that India wants to curtail CPEC and other socio-economic expansions of Chinese policies. Because Chinese OBOR initiatives are aimed to engage the countries of IOR and establish strong economic and strategic relations with them.

Consequently, it is outlining its strategy to counter the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) by providing soft loans, introducing developing projects in the littoral countries of the Indian Ocean. They are developing capacity building and even reactivating the historical trade routes under project MAUSAM that would help the countries across the continent. These robust development projects and cooperation agendas are not confined to economic or trade rather are strategically advantageous for India. Indian Minister for External Affairs has answered to a Lok Sabha during a session that until 2019, 254 projects aggregating nearly \$4.70 million have been completed while 194 projects worth nearly \$19 billion are under implementation phase (Chaudhury D. R., 2019). These include around 94 different development projects in five immediate neighbourhoods. India is also working on other tactical options like trilateral strategic partnership among India, Japan and US-Australia to counter increasing Chinese influence in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

4.5. The Amrit Kaal Vision 2047: the Concept and Strategy

In 2022, on the 75th anniversary of independence, the Prime Minister Narendra Modi has introduced the new naval strategy titled “Amrit Kaal Vision 2047” for the next 25 years. The vision envisioned for the dawn of new India in the coming 25 years. This project aimed to fragment all the aspects of the Indian economy with the objective to advance its infrastructure, economy, military capability and technology to win the trust of the whole world. The word “Amrita Kaal” means “the Era of Elixir” or it originates from Vedic astrology and symbolizes “the Golden Era” (Kl, 2023).

In 2023-2024, the first budget for this project is allocated. The industrial sector of India shall get higher attention by the government of India to increase the volume and potency for the future needs. India is currently the world’s fifth largest economy trailing only the USA, China, Japan and Germany and its GDP is \$3.4 trillion. According to Indian Finance Minister, Nirmala Sitharaman, the economy shall reach \$5 trillion by Financial Year 2028 and expected to reach \$30 trillion by 2047 (Jayaswal, 2024). The states shall be provided easy loans from the federal government for modernizing the industrial capabilities and the infrastructural modernization to meet these targets. The states with the coastlines are provided special loan under this budget for leveraging their strengths to overcome this challenge. The “Panch Pran” or five fundamentals of Amrit Kaal are described as follows (New India in Amrit Kaal, 2023).

1. The goal of developing India
2. Elimination of any trace of the colonial mindset
3. Honor
4. Pride in our roots
5. Development of unity

The Amrit Kaal is a scientific spirit and reinforcement of scientific temper to the economy of the country. The strategy aims to drive India out from the colonial mindset and follow the path envisaged for freedom from the colonial mindset. The expansion of Indian jingoism is aimed to drive the nation to the path of pride and honor which eliminates any trace of colonial mindset. The project is inching forward towards its completion and maturation.

The Amrit Kaal is aimed to increase India's indigenous naval shipbuilding industry; acquisition of India's advanced naval platforms, maritime surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities and development of advanced submarines for the futuristic perspective.

Chapter-5

5. Indian Naval Modernization: Traditional Security Challenges for Pakistan

India is working rapidly for its strategic force modernization and conventional buildup of its military capabilities. India has heavily invested on enhancing and modernizing its force structure. It has developed a huge number of sophisticated arsenals for the execution of its expansionist designs. They have also successfully developed and advanced its nuclear triad. It means the development of a sophisticated warhead is the first half of the complete equation and the second half is the seamless delivery to the prescribed target. India has already managed to develop and modernize it for the military and its air force, whereas now it has started its rapid modernization of the naval capabilities. Prof. John J. Mearsheimer proposes that the anarchic situation of the world system results in the state's desire for maximization of military power. In such conditions, survival is the fundamental objective of every state; however some states look beyond their basic objective. They have certain hegemonic designs and a sense of superiority that is embedded in their strategic thinking. They want to dominate the entire region and want to reach the status of "Akkhand Bharat" or "the Greater India". In this connection, they want to become the strongest in the region.

During the last few decades, much has changed in the Indian Ocean Region which attracts the international concerns for the deterrence stability of South Asia. China has emerged as a sole regional power with rapidly growing military capabilities. According to the US Department of Defence's 2020 annual report that People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) is not the largest navy in the world equipped with the advanced weapons and a powerful blue water fleet (Defence, 2020). The South Asian and as well as western experts forecast and predict that soon the Chinese navy will have a fleet for the Indian Ocean Region in the near

future due to rapidly increasing Chinese interest in the region. The rising military capabilities coincided with 2020 Indo-Chinese border skirmishes in Galwan near Line of Actual Control (LoAC) where China has dominated Indian border forces. The ripple of this border clash was later felt in the Indian Ocean Region with increasing Chinese naval presence. India perceived it as a strategic threat for its maritime interests. India increased the pace of its efforts to modernize its maritime posture and shore up its combat capabilities for future threats.

India is a huge economy and its coastline is stretched to 7500 kilometers making India essentially a maritime nation. The most of its trade is based on its sea-lanes of communication and due to China's presence in the IOR and their ambitious plans compelled them to prioritize their naval modernization. It is basically aimed to strengthen their geostrategic position in the region and India will emerge as a maritime power at the global level. There are a number of reasons why India is in the pursuit of this modernization to achieve its strategic goals. Firstly, the significance of the Indo-Pacific region has rapidly increased due to rise of China and its new great game with the USA and other world powers. India views itself as an important player in this region and aims to balance increasing Chinese influence. It wants to protect the maritime trade and energy routes passing through IOR and beyond which is crucial due to important strategic chokepoints like the Strait of Hormuz and the Malacca Strait. India also has a strategic goal of deterrence and power projection in the region through naval diplomacy and strategic partnerships with the littoral countries. The technological advancement enables India to achieve these strategic goals and due to its huge investment India has managed to commission advanced aircraft carriers, nuclear submarines and robust surveillance systems to protect its footprints in the IOR (Yap, 2025).

The primary cause of India's maritime development and rapid naval modernization is due to its security, India want to safeguard its maritime interests from increasing influence from China. The countries have seen hot pursuits in 2019 and modernizing the naval capabilities is India's response to China. New Delhi wants to attain balance in the changing security dynamics of the region. In this connection, India has given special focus to advanced aircraft carriers, Nuclear-powered Submarines (SSBNs) and Attack Submarines (SSNs), the presence of INS Chakra in the blue waters is an example of that. Although Pakistan wants to clean the blue waters of IOR from nuclear and lethal weapons for a better future of making this water body an economic opportunity, however India has already taken a step to complicate the situation. (Ashraf, 2020). In quick response to Chinese growing maritime influence and dominance in the blue waters, India has started an ocean security paradigm and weaponized the IOR.

Likewise, this is also an obvious fact that India has more weapons, standing military force, economic volume and strategic edge over Pakistan and it poses substantive threat to Pakistan's maritime security. The nature of threat is multifaceted and nuanced due to its multiple dimensions. The size and sophistication of the navies, their fleets, technological advancements and other factors heightens this issue. Although with respect to the strategic and nuclear deterrence both countries maintain the Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD), which is a major cause of concern for the entire region. Pakistan has tried to attain deterrence by adopting the policy of "first use" if it came to its national security (Syed S. , 2024). However, India has conventional military superiority over Pakistan and doctrinal maneuvering has enabled India to launch swift, limited and punitive conventional attack to avoid nuclear exchange. It is further reinforced by the employing hybrid strategy of proxy war to stage

insurgency and terrorism inside Pakistan (Chaudhary, Zaighum, & Ali, 2024). India's economy is substantially larger and stable than Pakistan which enables the country to attain advanced technology for naval modernization. These naval modernizations pose a substantive security threat for Pakistan and raise traditional security challenges for the country.

However, its rapidly increasing conventional capabilities will directly threat Pakistan's naval interests due to its longstanding strategic conflict and due to Chinese presence in Karachi and Gwadar due to the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Some of India's naval capabilities are examined and evaluated in this chapter and how India will increase and modernize its existing traditional/conventional, naval competencies by 2035.

Although India has not officially claimed that its naval modernization is aimed to destabilize the entire region by posing threat to Pakistan's security. It has not shown any intention of blocking trade routes for Pakistan or creating a security dilemma by adversely influencing the free trade on Karachi and Gwadar port. As the maritime security and any change in the security paradigm of the region is a part of broader strategic concern for any littoral country especially Pakistan. The two countries have longstanding unresolved geopolitical issues. Both countries are nuclear armed and conventionally formidable military powers. It is factually true that India has not shown any impression of its intention of blocking the routes for Pakistan. However, the physical prevention of ships or controlling the sea-lanes of communication by India can escalate the situation. The powerful navy with advanced capabilities can result in escalation at any stage like in 2019, immediately after the Pulwama attack, the two countries were engaged significantly. These conflicts ideally remain limited due to the nuclear deterrence, however due to the complexity of the relations the threats of escalation in the blue waters are inevitable.

The concept of traditional security was coined by Barry Buzan, a core concept within the international relations and global politics. Barry Buzan's primary concept of international security studies is concerned with the survival of the state, as the anarchic international system is aimed to inflict harm to other states for their own national interests (Buzan & Hansen, 2009). It mainly focuses on military threats and external aggression as the main security concern. The key elements of the traditional security are as follows,

- i. The State is the Primary Referent Object in a sense that security is about protecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state.
- ii. The Anarchic International System is based on anarchy which is key assumption of realism. This creates a system of self-help that every state must do something to safeguard its national integrity and sovereignty from any intervention.
- iii. Military Force and Threats are main factors of concern. The arms race and militarization is a natural response to any security threat.
- iv. Power and Balance is an effective tool of traditional security which can be achieved through strategic alliances and development of conventional military capabilities. The primary objective of joining alliances is aimed to attain deterrence and defence of the national interest.

5.1 Aircraft Carrier

An aircraft carrier is a kind of warship that is used as an oceangoing and floating air base that is typically equipped with all the facilities and necessary gears required for carrying, arming, deploying, recovering and repairing aircrafts. It does have a full-length surface that serves as a flight deck, weapons and fuel depot for a war situation. The aircraft carrier contains a long deck for landing and taking off fighter jets with a hangar deck that is used for the storage,

maintenance and other facilities. Principally, it is the chief battleship and a sea elephant that allows a naval force to dominate the sea and aerial warfare without having an air base on ground. It is an alternative for staging a full fleet of fighter jets on an air base near the war zone. The aircraft carriers started being commissioned in the navy a decade before World War I. The first ever launch of an aircraft from a stationary ship having a full-length surface took place on 14th of November 1910 in Virginia, United States of America. However, on September 5, 1914 during the battle of Tsingtao, the Imperial Japanese Navy (IJN) seaplane carrier *Wakamiya* carried out the world's first naval launched air raids from Kiaochow Bay during the Siege of Tsingtao (Macdonald, 2021). Aircraft carriers played a strategic role during World War II and the US carried out a number of decisive operations against Japan and the Indo-Pacific, whereas the Royal Japanese Navy had also carried out numerous operations against the USA by using them. Later, the development and modernization of aircraft carriers has become rapidly fast. The US especially deployed its forces in the conflicting areas to counter Soviet Union during Cold War. They stationed its force near Greece, Turkey and Ukraine to deter Soviet invasion. Even besides that in the non-Cold War conflicts including Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962, Anglo-French invasion of Egypt in 1956, Arab-Israel Conflicts, Korean and Vietnam Crisis, Airstrikes against Libya in 1986, Iraq war in 1991 and almost every conflict in the Middle East, Africa or elsewhere. After the September 11 attacks, most of the United States aerial strikes in Afghanistan and Iraq were launched from its aircraft carriers deployed in the Arabian Sea. The missiles and fighter jets flew from those carriers, crossed the aerial space of Pakistan, and targeted the enemy positions. It is often truly recounted since 1970s that whenever a world crisis arose anywhere in the world, in the white house's situation room the question be asked, "Where are the carriers?" (Polmar, 2008).

Although all the major maritime powers of the world have commissioned aircraft carriers for their strategic needs. The issue appears to be ostensibly interesting since the modern history of naval warfare shows that aircraft carriers have not been deployed with a major role in the region. However, due to unique geostrategic compulsions of the region and rapidly rising Chinese influence and presence in the Indo-Pacific and Indian Ocean Region, India is planning to increase the operational and tactical role of its aircraft carriers. They played a strategically imperative role in the 1971 Indo-Pakistani war. In that continental war, India deployed *INS Vikrant* to strike strategic targets deep inside eastern Pakistan that ultimately led to the fall of Dhaka (Khurana, 2018). Moreover, India has a coastline of around 7500 km with a two million square km Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), so deployment of aircraft carriers gives India operational swiftness and maneuverability.

India has aimed to build three aircraft carriers named *INS Vikramaditya*, *INS Vikrant* and *INS Vishal* for the future of its navy. One carrier for its western and eastern seaboard to counter China and Pakistan and third to cycle around for maintenance. The brief detail of their capability, strength and strategic significance is described here under:

5.1.1 *INS Vikramaditya*

INS Vikramaditya is a Kiev-class aircraft carrier, which is modified for the Indian Navy. It has been commissioned in the Indian Navy since 2013. This 30-year-old ship named *Admiral Gorshkov* was first built in Baku and was commissioned in the Soviet Navy later it served in the Russian navy. India negotiated with Russia for the procurement in 1994 and after successful negotiation, a MoU was signed between the two countries. In January 2004, India agreed a \$1.5bn deal with Russia for the modernization of that vessel and the same was

delivered to India in 2013 after several combat and navigation tests in the White Sea. It can endure 45 days at sea and can carry 8000tn of low Sulphur high speed and quality diesel.

The vessel can carry more than 30 long-range multi-role fighters with anti-ship missiles, air-to-air missiles, guided bombs, and rockets (Chaudhury R. R., 2000). The fighter jets include the modified single seated MiG 29K, off British Aerospace Sea Harrier combat aircrafts which are famous as naval short take off, Sea King helicopter, Chetak helicopters, Kamov 28 naval helicopters, Kamov 31 Airborne Early warning (AEW) helicopters and HAL Dhruv utility helicopter. The carrier is equipped with advanced weaponry system that includes beyond visual range missiles, Barak-8 air defence system, guided bombs, rockets and a wide range of anti-ship missiles. The vessel is equipped with advance sensor system, long-range air surveillance system, state of the art launch, recovery and radar system and advance electronic war suite to deal weather warfare situation.

5.1.2. INS Vikrant

INS Vikrant is 262 meters long and 43000 tons heavy, first indigenously built aircraft carrier in service of the Indian navy since 2014. The carrier was constructed by a famous Indian company i.e., Cochin Shipyard Limited in Kerala. The carrier has around 2300 compartments crewed by around 1700 people, one small hospital and separate rooms for female crew members and long corridors stretched to a distance of around eight kilometers. The Vikrant air group forms a strong air muscle for the aircraft carrier. It includes 26 Rafael or MiG 28 fighter aircrafts, upto 4 Kamov Ka-31 2 HAL Dhruv utility helicopters, and 4 MH-60R Seahawk helicopters (Raghuvanshi, 2022)..

INS Vikrant is aimed to increase India's strategic expansion in the IOR and South China Sea. Although New Delhi has kept her eye on Pakistan but China has always been

India's increasing focus due to its rapidly modernizing navy. In 2022, China has commissioned its third aircraft carrier to People's Liberation Army Navy (PLA Navy) and first indigenously built aircraft carrier named the vessel *Fujian*. *Fujian* is one of the world's advanced aircraft carriers with a functioning electromagnetic catapult and arresting devices enabling the planes to land and take off on its deck with ease (Schuster, 2024). It will enable the carrier to keep heavy and fatal fighter jets on its deck. *Fujian* will be operational with the start of 2025; it has a greater reach than any of the European aircraft carriers in service with an additional strength of its air wing.

5.1.3 INS Vishal

INS Vishal (or IAC-2) is Indian Navy's third aircraft carrier and second indigenously built carrier and its manufacture was already planned as soon as the procurement of its first aircraft carrier INS Vikrant (or IAC-1) was started. The size of the aircraft carrier is proposed as around 65000 to 75000 tons, initially it was planned that the carrier will be nuclear powered but later it was changed to integrated electric propulsion system. It is expected that the carrier shall be equipped with electromagnetic catapults for advance landing system; the same type of landing system is in use of Chinese PLA-Navy's aircraft carrier *Fujian* (Joe, 2021). It will enable the heavy fighter jets to land smoothly on the deck. The carrier is strategically compatible for both a mix of fixed-wing fighter jets and helicopters. The navy plans to deploy different fighter aircrafts on it including MiG-28, Mikoyan MiG-29K and HAL Tejas aircrafts. In February 2023, as part of operationalizing the deployment of its fighter jets to INS Vikrant, India successfully landed its first fixed-wings fighter aircraft HAL Tejas that was followed by a MiG-29K (Sharma R. , 2024).

5.2 Submarines

The man has relentlessly been in the pursuit of understanding and conquering nature and its environment and in doing so, faced several challenging missions. However, the most breathtaking and tormenting challenge was the mastery of the sub-sea world. This new world has been perceived as strewn, imaginary and fatal since nobody has ever explored or imagined how to control the deep-water waves. The idea of controlling the deep seas was not only for exploration and for movement but it was also for war and punitive strike capabilities was a fanciful dream. Meanwhile, the industrial revolution in the west initiated a new era and the technological advancement in the later centuries had later materialized it. Ultimately, the advent of 20th century submarines became fully functional in the naval warfare.

A submarine is a vessel designed to independently operate deep underwater. They have cylindrical body shape and a vertical structure specially designed for specific operational needs. They are used in many navies for over a century and perform strategic roles in naval warfare. Submarines are weapons of stealthy and surprise capable of operating with versatility for attack denial. They act as a force multiplier. They truly serve as a force multiplier and deter all types of adversaries. This is the first weapon of any kind in which stealth technology was introduced due to its clandestine strategic use. The greatest point in favour of a submarine is its invisibility in each of the three positions in which it is designed to maneuver, i.e., on the surface, awash and submerged (Domville-Fife, 1910).

5.2.1 Conventional Submarines

The conventional submarines are those submarines that work on batteries and diesel engines. Most of their fundamental character remained as it was since the time of their early inception. These includes their battery, weapons capabilities and maneuvering limitations. The most of the deployment time they remain on the surface and submerge only to prey on the

enemy. They are slower than most of the fighter surface ships, whereas comparatively faster than most of the conventional merchant ships. The conventional submarines are mostly driven by electric motors that are charged and functioned with the diesel engine. The conventional diesel engine submarines have limitation of its endurance under water due to exhaustion of fuel that is mostly 24 hours. It has been improved during the past century due to innovative technological advancements like the Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) system. However, the same still has certain functional limitations.

Indian navy has commissioned sixteen conventional diesel-powered submarines to its naval force. The Indian submarine fleet is located at Visakhapatnam on the eastern coast and on Mumbai the western coast (Bisht, 2022). Most of India's agreements for the acquisition of submarines are based on the transfer of technology instead of obtaining the submarines; it helps India to indigenously build those submarines at low cost.

i. **Shishumar Class (Type 209 Submarine)** are diesel electric attack submarines currently active in service of the Indian Navy. India has obtained and deployed these submarines to its navy to augment its strategic capabilities for undersea warfare. These submarines are deployed and stationed in Mumbai. Indian engineers have made necessary modifications in the German Type 209 submarines manufactured by Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft and successfully developed/constructed an Indian variant as per needs. India currently has 4 Shishumar Class submarines in service, two of which were manufactured in Kiel, Germany whereas the remaining two were built in Mazagon Dock Limited, Mumbai (Ramkumar & Panneerselvam, 2023).. This submarine provides India not only strategic presence in the Indian Ocean region in the littoral and open seas, but above that these submarines provide India with operational flexibility. This flexibility includes information

gathering, operationalization of naval missions, security and defence. The submarine has displacement weight of around 1,450 tons and its surface speed is 11 knots (20 kilometers per hour) and submerged speed is 22 knots i.e., approximately 41 kilometers per hour (Anandan, 2013).

ii. Sindhughosh class (Kilo-class) Submarines are diesel electric attack submarines in service of the Indian Navy since 1986. The Kilo-Class submarines can be used for long-range attacks and they are outfitted with six 21-inches torpedo tubes, which are used to launch both naval mines and torpedoes (Kass, 2023). These torpedoes usually launch Kalibr/Klub missiles to long-range targets with accuracy and precision. Russia has deployed the same these submarines to attack ISIS in 2015 and in its recent attack on Ukraine to hit the targets on land. The submarines were acquired after a bilateral agreement between the Indian Ministry of Defence and Rosvooruzhenie, a Russian agency responsible for imports/exports of Defence goods and equipment. It has a displacement weight of 2,325 tons and its maximum surface speed is 11 knots (20 kilometers per hour) and submerged speed is 18 knots i.e., 35 kilometers per hour (Singh & Garg, 2021). The submarine has a capability to stay at a solo mission for 45 days with a crew of 53 people. India has commissioned 10 Sindhughosh class submarines to its Navy and 3 have recently been retired whereas 7 are active in service.

iii. Kalvari Class is a diesel electric attack submarine based on Scorpene-class submarine design and commissioned in the Indian Navy in 2017. The submarines are built by French naval defence institute DCNS at Mazagon Dock Limited at Mumbai, India. It is 67.5 meters long and it has 1,615 surface displacements with surface speed 11 knots (20km per hour) and submerged speed around 20 knots (37 km per hour) (Sumeda, 2023). Scorpene-class submarines are one of lethal weapons and are called the silent killer. The Kalvari Class

submarines are manufactured for offensive operations and invasive attack in a full spectrum naval warfare. India has currently agreed to commission six Kalvari Class submarines to its naval force to fulfil its immediate needs. The cost of six units of Kalvari class submarine is around US\$ 3.6 in 2020. The four of them are expected to be commissioned this year. They have opened a new era in the combat capabilities of the Indian Navy.

iv. Project 75I Class, is India project aimed to procure highly sophisticated conventional and nuclear submarines to increase its underwater combat capabilities. This is believed as the largest acquisition of defence equipment by New Delhi that would cost around 43 thousand crores (Sagar, 2023). India would acquire state of the art submarines in collaboration and coordination with the foreign countries. These submarines will provide India exceptional dominance in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and will robust its naval fleets. These project 75I submarines are equipped with advanced technology, long-range capabilities, punitive strike capabilities and its Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) provides its sustenance and long endurance underwater. This planned project of India aims to build 6 indigenous conventional diesel electric submarines for its navy. The submarines will be built with advanced capabilities in India and commissioned in the navy. The capabilities of the submarines shall include conducting Anti-Surface warfare (ASuW), Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW), Anti-Ship Warfare (AShW), Special Operations Forces (SOF) and supporting operations in open seas and shallow waters.

5.2.2 Nuclear Submarines

The nuclear submarines are those submarines that are powered by nuclear reactors but not essentially equipped with nuclear weapons. The nuclear submarines have substantial performance edge over the conventional submarines due to high power and energy. It gives it

maneuverability; endurance and performance edge in real-time. The US and Britain are the only countries in the world which uses Highly Enriched Uranium in the onboard nuclear reactor of their submarines and therefore they do not need replacement of Uranium. Whereas other countries like France need replacement after a specific period because they use a type of uranium which is high density and low enriched Uranium (Kurmeloves, 2021). The nuclear submarines are quieter, faster, advanced and have longer endurance for operational deployment.

In India, the first idea of constructing and deploying the nuclear submarines was envisaged and originated in the 1990s. The presence of Chinese nuclear submarines and strong navy in the Indian Ocean Region and expansion of Indian trade has further increased the deterrent role of nuclear submarines for India.

i. **Charlie Class Submarines** are India's first nuclear powered submarines which were commissioned in the Indian navy from 1988 to 1991, to give the Indian navy an experience of operationally handling the nuclear submarine. The submarine was first built between 1968 and 11 in total were built in the next five years by Russia. One Charlie Class, K-43 submarine was leased to India for a period of five years from 1988 to 1992, it was named as Chakra. Later, five more submarines were leased to India for a further period of ten years by Russia (Gady F.-S. , 2019).

ii. **Arihant class, INS Arihant (S4) submarine** is a class of nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines; the project is aimed to construct four advanced nuclear-powered submarines with a budget of US\$ 40 billion. Since 2016, two submarines are built and commissioned in the Indian navy, whereas the remaining two shall be completed by 2030. The Arihant-class SSBN (Sub Surface Ballistic Nuclear) Submarines code-named as S4. The S4

submarines are equipped with K-15 (B-05) short range SLBM with a target range of 700 kilometers and K-4, a LRBM to target around 3,500 kilometers with nuclear warhead (Bhattacharjee, 2022). The technological advanced capabilities and long operational endurance enables India to attain credible second-strike capability. The second-strike capability is strategically essential especially when the land based nuclear assets are completely compromised. These vessels are classified as strategic strike nuclear submarines and are the first indigenously built and commissioned to Indian Navy. (Bedi, 2021). They additionally supported eight vertically launched ballistic missile tubes that have a long-range strike range of around 35 kilometers.

iii. Chakra-II or Akula class submarines are Russian made 4th generation nuclear powered attack submarines. Russians have designated them as project 971 and they were first constructed and deployed by the Russian navy in 1986. The submarine was named as INS Chakra and commissioned in the Indian navy on April 4, 2012 after defence agreement and deliberations on bilateral levels. Before its commission in the India Navy more than four hundred Indian naval officers and crew members were trained and were provided hands-on experience for smooth functioning and operational understanding. The Russian version of **Akula-II** can be equipped with 28 cruise missiles armed with nuclear warheads and is capable of striking a target at a distance of around 3000 kilometers with accuracy. Whereas, the Indian version is equipped with Cube-S nuclear missiles (Radyuhin, 2006).

iv. Project 75 Alpha is India's new project aimed to build and procure nuclear powered submarines for its navy. In 2015, the government of India has officially approved the construction of five nuclear powered submarines at the Navy Shipbuilding Center, Visakhapatnam for their future needs. Previously, India has procured Russian made nuclear

submarines. They are the third class of nuclear submarines used by the Indian Navy. According to this project, six nuclear submarines shall be built and the project shall complete by 2030. The Indian media reports that this project is strategically more important than the project of constructing the third aircraft carrier (Gupta S. , 2021).

5.3. Maritime Domain Awareness

The Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) is an essential part of law enforcement, internal and international security and safety. The intelligence is used to ensure any activity in the territorial waters including piracy, human trafficking, smuggling, unreported and illegal movement, unlawful interventions and terrorism in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) that can affect and disrupt the vital national interests of one country. However, it is possible for the rightful authorities of the states to exercise their sovereign powers to ensure comprehensive security by enforcement of laws and implement them with their physical force to the external interventions.

5.3.1 GSAT-7 Spy Satellite-Rukmini: Informational Edge| Real Time Information

A spy satellite or reconnaissance satellite is a satellite that is deployed and used for intelligence gathering of the enemy on ground, air or sea. It is a kind of satellite that is made for continuous monitoring and observation of earth surface and any changes going on it for any purpose. However, most of this reconnaissance is based on security and strategic purposes. Earlier as the beginning, the very first generation of spy satellites were capable of only taking photographs and pictures for intelligence gathering of subject areas. The defence ministry of India signed a 3000-crore contract with Isro's commercial arm New Space India Ltd (NSIL) for the satellite (Singhh, 2023). However, as a second generation the videos were filmed for even more advanced and clear observation of movement. Now, the most recent developments

include the advanced digital imaging system and the images are downloaded from encrypted video links.

The GSAT-7 Rukmini is a dedicated satellite of the Indian Air Force for intelligence and surveillance. The primary objective and purpose of this satellite is to connect Indian air units including fighter jets, helicopters, drones and airborne units, radars and other likely gears. India is using two satellites of GSAT-7 for more than 30 percent of its air reconnaissance requirements and is acting as the Indian navy's eye in the Indian Ocean region and its maritime border with China. It is India's first satellite developed and deployed for military purposes and is currently used by Indian Navy. Rukmini has not only helped the Navy keep an eye on both Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal but also helped the force increase its communication and surveillance capabilities from Persian Gulf to Malacca Strait which together is equivalent to almost 70% of the IOR (Singh S. , "Amid Stand-Off, India's GSAT-7 Satellite 'Rukmini', Is Keeping An Eye On China's Activities At Sea", 2017). Due to increasing Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and their border conflict over Sikkim, the Rukmini will help India to overcome the problem related to the line of sight. This satellite will assist India in monitoring the land movements of the army and the airborne objects of their enemies.

5.3.2 P8I – anti-Submarine Warfare Aircraft

The Boeing P-8 Orion is a US aircraft for maritime patrol, reconnaissance and targeting purposes. The aircraft was designed and developed by Boeing Defence, Space and Security, the design and shape have close resemblance to the civilian Boeing aircraft. The P8 Orion has three main purposes and functions to perform; it is used for anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare and for surveillance purposes. It is strategically a lethal war machine, which is equipped with torpedoes, Harpoon anti-ship missiles and can also drop and monitor Sonobuoys

(Theberge, 2009). Sonobuoys are used for surveillance purposes and they are deployed for the detection of underwater submarines. They float underwater and transmit signals to the aircraft after detecting any movement of submarines. This is force multiplier aircraft that has augmented the Indian naval role in the region.

In 2009, India signed a contract with the United States worth US \$3.9 for eight P8 Orion multi mission aircrafts. The first aircraft was delivered to India in December 2012 (Sakhuja, 2013). After this India became the first country outside the United States, which has started operating P8 Orion, and after a bilateral agreement between the two countries in 2013, first three P8 Orion aircrafts were commissioned in the Indian Navy's maritime surveillance unit (Kaushik, 2022). India has received seven P8 Orion aircrafts in 2015. These aircrafts have become the Indian Navy's P8I squadron. They are aimed to detect, deter and destroy the enemy ships and submarines during-warlike situation.

5.3.3 Kamov Surveillance and Reconnaissance

Kamov Ka-25 are naval helicopters made for the former Soviet Union and currently manufactured for the Russian Navy. It is a multirole helicopter but the primary purpose of its development and deployment was for anti-submarine warfare. The helicopter was first produced in the 1960s due to increasing role of submarines after World War II. It entered service with the Soviet Navy by 1963. The helicopters have imperative capability to fly from the ship deck and hover in the enemy areas, conduct a surveillance operation the helicopter has takeoff weight around 3.6 tons and can take upto 1 ton payload for operations and can fly at a top speed of 220 km/h with six people.

In 2015, a bilateral agreement was signed between Russia and India in New Delhi for the joint construction of 200 Ka-226T helicopters in the period of next 9 years (Gurung, 2016).

It was agreed that the first 60 helicopters should be produced in Russia whereas the remaining 140 helicopters shall be produced in India. The agreement further ensures that initially the repair and overhaul facilities shall be provided in Russia for initial five years, later on this joint venture will enable India to establish maintenance facilities in India. It will help in localization of production, maintenance and furthering the capabilities of India for the futuristic perspectives.

5.3.4 Romeo Sikorsky Helicopters

Rome Sikorsky is US navy's multi mission helicopter developed for maritime surveillance and targeting. The helicopter is designed for deployment on any type ship-deck including frigates, corvettes, destroyers, cruisers, amphibious assault ships or aircraft carriers. It has a maximum speed of 168 mph (270 km/h), maximum takeoff weight 10,433 kg, effective range is 830 km and it can carry 5 passengers with 3 crew members. The MH-60Rs are equipped with a mission sensor suite and APS-153 multimode radar with long/short range search inverse synthetic aperture radar imaging and periscope detection modes (Kadidal, 2022). The armament of MH-60Rs includes upto three Mark 46 or Mark 50 torpedoes, AGM-114 Hellfire missile (4 in SH-60B and 8 for MH-60S), AGM-119 Penguin missiles, Rapid airborne mine clearance system (RAMICS) using Mark 44 torpedo and a 7.62 mm M60, M240, GAU-17/A machine gun or 50 caliber GAU-16/A machine gun.

MH-60R Seahawk Romeo Sikorsky helicopter is the most advanced maritime helicopter, it has strategically very important and most capable helicopters to counter a threat attack from sea, underwater and airborne activity (Garg, 2022). The first mission of Romeo Sikorsky helicopters is surveillance and targeting of enemy submarines and surface ships, after that the second important mission it performs is search and rescue. They are also good for

intelligence gathering, logistics, medical evacuation and combat missions. India has acquired 16 multirole S-70B multirole helicopters to replace the Westland Sea King Fleet. In August 2018, the Indian ministry of defence approved the purchase of 24 M-60R helicopters and then in April 2019, the pentagon approved Tmh-60R anti-submarine helicopters to India.

5.3.5 MQ9 Reaper Guardian: Maritime Surveillance and Targeting

The traditional airplanes take off from a particular airfield, cover a huge distance to reach their target position and drop bombs on their target position. The pilots guide them to their proposed target position in the enemy territory and lead the plane towards the extraction point. This practice is good for well-defined and high value missions at the time of war. Whereas, the modern advancements in the military gear and war strategies new technologies are introduced to carry out such missions. The rapid technological advancements, GPS coordinates and combat effectiveness have given flight agility to the unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to carry out such missions. MQ-9 Reaper is an example of such remotely piloted aircraft, which is controlled by the units on ground to carry out surveillance and targeting missions in the enemy territory. The MQ-9 Reaper is believed to be one of the world's most sophisticated and highly trusted UAV drones for reconnaissance and targeting.

The Indian navy has leased two MQ-9 Reaper Sea guardians from the United States for extended surveillance of the Indian Ocean. The two countries have accorded for further thirty UAV drones for the coming years because India is expanding its naval muscle for maritime domain awareness. The predator is 36 ft (11 m) long, has a wingspan of 65 ft (20 m), a height of 12.6 (3.81 m), empty weight is 2,223 kg and maximum take-off weight is 4,760 kg (Chopra, 2021). It is capable of long endurance and can hover at high altitude with clear targeting

capability. It is equipped with an 8-leaser guided missile, one air to ground hellfire missile with anti-armor and punitively accurate targeting capability.

The Indian government has made an announcement after a successful bilateral dialogue with the United States reports that India will procure 30 MQ-9Bs Reaper drones from the United States at a cost over \$3 billion for surveillance purposes of Chinese activities in the region (PTI, 2023). The MQ-9B Sea Guardian is a variant of Predator B for maritime domain awareness. The aircraft has shown exceptional endurance and operational steadfastness for the maritime missions and covered almost 14 million square miles of sea area. India had procured two Sea Guardians from the US under an emergency procurement lease and looking to induct 30 MQ-9 Reaper or Predator B UCAVs as part of a \$3 billion tr-service contract (Banerjee, 2021).

5.4. Destroyers: INS Visakhapatnam

In naval technology, destroyers are the fast moving, maneuvering and a combatant ship famous for long endurance of war and escort missions in a fleet. A destroyer is a small, high speed and lightly protected vessel developed in 1885 by Fernando Vilaamil during the age of sail for the Spanish Navy (Osborne, 2005). The Indian navy operates 11 guided missile destroyers out of its total 132 warships. These destroyers are divided into three main classes, Kolkata Class, Delhi Class and Rajput Class. The destroyers were large, swift and well-equipped torpedo boats to target other torpedo and fatal warships. The post-World War II era has experienced innovations in the conventional warfare and weaponry system. Most importantly, the **Exocet** in the 1960s transformed the entire war strategy and tactics of naval warfare.

Ten destroyers from three classes are active in the Indian Naval Service. The Kolkata-Class destroyer, Delhi-Class destroyer and Rajput-Class destroyer.

i. The **INS-Impal (D68)** is a symbol of India's growing naval power and maritime dominance. It bolsters India's new slogan and principle of 'Jalmev Yasya, Balmev Tasya' (One who controls the sea is all powerful) in the Indo-Pacific Region (Peri, 2023). This is the third ship under Project 15B equipped with guided missiles. INS-Impal is a state-of-the-art warship equipped with stealth technology. The ship is indigenously developed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd. INS-Impal is one of the deadly and independent lethal war machines roaring in the Indian Ocean demonstrating India's thrust for dominating the blue waters. The size of the ship is measure as 163 meters in length, displacing 7,400 tones and with 75% indigenous content, Impal can rightfully be regarded as one of the most potent warships to have been constructed in India (Singh S. , "'INS Imphal', India's first warship named after a northeast city, to be commissioned on December 26", 2023). Due to speed, maneuverability, stealth technology, punitive firepower and advanced air defence system gives the destroyer an exceptional standing in the Indian naval arsenal. This indigenously built lethal component of Indian navy have increased the strategic standing of Indian Navy in the Indian in Indian Ocean Region and beyond. It also incorporates two multirole indigenously built American MH-60R helicopters on deck (Mayank, 2023).

ii. The **Delhi-class destroyers** were built from 1987-2001 and commissioned in the Indian navy in 1997. Their displacement weight is around 6,200 tones with a best speed of 32 knots (around 59 kilometers per hour). It has BEL Ajanta Mk2 ESM Electronica TQN-2 Jammer for electronic warfare and it carries two sea king Mk 42B helicopters on board (Kulkarni, 2023). The several weapons and sensors of these destroyers are being modernized

and upgraded from April 2022. New missile system, air defence system and radar shall be replaced for better maneuverability and performance in war situations. The destroyers are equipped with a variety of weapons for advanced anti-submarine, anti-surface and anti-air warfare capabilities in all weathers. They are among the most advanced floating war machines capable of engaging threats from all domains.

iii. **The Kolkata-Class or Project 15A** are a class of Indian destroyers which are indigenously built from 2003 to 2015 and commissioned in the Indian Navy since 2014. They are succeeded by the Visakhapatnam class of Indian destroyers and their estimated cost is US\$ 660 million per ship in 2020. India currently has three Kolkata-class destroyers active in its naval fleet. Their displacement weight is 7,400 tons and best speed is 30 knots (around 33 kilometers per hour). The first Project 15B destroyer, the Visakhapatnam was laid down in 2015 and commissioned in 2022 by the Indian Navy (Wertheim, 2024). Each destroyer is equipped with BEL Ellora electronic support measures for electronic warfare and can carry two Sea King or HAL Dhruv helicopters onboard. The destroyer has blending capabilities across the board to deal with war-like situations.

iv. The **Rajput-Class Destroyers** are a class of Indian destroyers which are the transformed version of the former Soviet Kashin-class destroyers. It was decommissioned by Moscow and later the same was shift to India with its new design and modifications. The modifications were mostly made in the design, weapons and combat system of the ship. India had five Rajput-class destroyers in service, and two destroyers are retired from the destroyer decommissioned from Indian naval service on May 21, 2021. The total displacement weight is 3,950 tons and its best speed is 35 knots (65 kilometer per hour). The destroyer carries one

Kamov Ka-28 or two HAL Cheetah helicopters onboard for operational and escort missions (Janyala, 2021).

5.5 **Project 17-A: Frigates**

The word frigate was initially pronounced or used to describe any fast, lightweight, low armored and maneuverable warship. In the 16th century Spain, it was a type of galley, whereas in 17th century Dunkirk, it referred to a small sailing privateer but during the 18th century, the term came to be applied to a very specific type of vessel (Allan, 2023). A frigate is a seagoing escort ship intermediate in size between Destroyer and Corvettes. Frigates are the most imperative warships developed and evolved since the age of sails. They were designed and built to act as a formidable opponent in the seas for the outnumbered enemies with firepower. The vessel carries huge supplies and can sail independently for more than six months in the high seas for war and scouting. These ships were not as powerful or swift; rather they were built for scouting, curbing the piracy and defence of merchant ships.

India has also commissioned Shivalik Class or Project 17 Frigates to the Indian Navy for the defence and scouting purposes. The advanced stealth features and land attack features were introduced which were not available in the precedent **Talwar Class Frigates**. The project 17 was conceived in the 1990s and the required frigates were indigenously built at Mazagon Dock Limit, Mumbai. The first three stealth frigates of Project 17, Shivalik Class were started building in 1999 and were commissioned in the Indian Navy by 2012. They have a mix indigenous, Russian and western weaponry systems and sensor systems including Russian Shtil surface-to-air missile system, Klub anti-ship cruise missiles and Israeli Barak-I missile defence system (Technology, 2009). Their stealth features, structure, system and engines are modified in such a way that they are less detectable to the enemies.

The Nilgiri Class Frigates or Project 17 Alpha Frigates are India's most advanced stealth frigates. They are indigenously built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders (MDS) and Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) and two of them "Surat" and "Udaygiri" which are built by MDS shall be commissioned in the Indian Navy (Dhar, 2022). The Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders will build 4 ships, while GRSE will build the remaining three. Their integrated modern design will ensure the reduced radar signature and shall give operational maneuverability during escort missions. It is 28kn (52 kilometer per hour). The vessel is equipped with an advanced weaponry system. The forward bow deck is equipped with an Oto Melara 127mm naval gun system that has an effective firing range of 30kms, two AK-630 close-in weapon systems for defence onboard (Deshpande, 2022). The AK-630 to defend the boat from anti-ship missiles and guided weapons, aircrafts, vessels, shore-based targets and floating mines. Each frigate shall be armed with eight BrahMos Surface-to-Air Missiles (SAM) and 32 Barak 8 missile systems, BrahMos is a vertically launched medium-range supersonic cruise missile with an affective range of 500kms (Singh R. , 2022). The two RBU-6000 ASW rockets launchers and two triple-torpedo tubes gives the Frigate Anti-Submarine-Warfare (ASW) system (Satam, 2024).

5.6. Corvettes: ASW

Corvettes are small warships. These are the smallest class of warships that are used for naval warfare. Frigates are known as traditionally bigger warship than Corvettes, whereas sloop-of-war are smaller than Corvettes which usually have a single gun deck and commonly carry 18 to 20 guns. The Corvettes are mostly used for Coastal patrol, escort missions, piracy, surveillance and small naval war missions. The traditional corvettes weigh between 500 to

2000 tons, however, the modern corvettes weigh up to 3000 tons with a hanger for helicopter landing. They are also deployed for the anti-submarine-warfare (ASW) missions.

The Indian ASW Corvettes are a class of anti-submarine Warfare corvettes which are currently built by the Indian navy. The 16 ASW Corvettes are planned to be built and 14 are under construction that shall be commissioned in the Indian Navy. The total cost of this project is around US\$ 1.6 billion. The corvettes will have a weight of 700 tons with a speed of 25 knots (around 46 km per hour). The vessel shall be equipped with one RBU-6000 anti-submarine rocket launcher and two sets of light weight torpedo-tube-launchers for anti-submarine torpedoes for hunting down the enemy submarines (Mundhra, 2023). The armament of corvettes is mostly different and vary with respect to its mission requirements and technology. India is strategically focused on indigenous building, maintenance and production of advanced ammunition. Therefore, the advanced corvettes shall have even more sophisticated weaponry systems and sensors tailored to handle the situation and also to face maritime challenges. The vessels are also equipped with one small caliber cannon (30mm CRN-91) and two 12.7 mm M2 “Stabilized Remote Controlled Gun” Remote-Weapon Stations (RWS) (Maritime, 2021). Indian Navy is currently operating Veera-Class Corvettes and in future they are planning to indigenously build and commission advanced Abhay-Class Corvettes with modern fire-power and missile capabilities.

5.7. Air Defence System for Indian Navy

The countries deploy various types of air Defence Systems to protect their naval assets, fleet and valued installations from external threats. These threats can either be from enemy fighter jets, helicopters or missiles. The modern navies deploy numerous air defence systems to counter strategic deliberations by the enemies.

The air defence system of the Indian Navy is designed to intercept any airborne threat for its fleet and it has technically and tactically modernized over the time for increased scope and operational need. The primary objective of the air defence system is to ensure control of airspace from any external intervention and secondly, to protect the strategically significant units and naval assets at littoral and offshore. The naval air defence system has rapidly modernized after 1958 due to tactical advancements in the war strategies and weapon systems. Some of the recently rationalized Indian Air Defence systems are categorized and described as follows.

5.7.1 Surface to Air Missiles (SAMs)

The strong navies use a number of Surface to Air Missiles (SAM) to defend themselves from the external threats. The SAMs based defence system protects the valuable assets from attack with swiftness and accuracy by neutralizing it. India has adopted a number system in collaboration with its foreign allies including the United States, Russia, France and Israel. The strategically important air defence system deployed by the Indian Navy is described as under.

Barak – 8, Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MR-SAM)

Barak-8 also known as Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MR-SAM) is an Indo-Israel joint venture. This missile and air defence system developed in a close collaboration between India's Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). It is a surface-to-air missile (SAM), designed and developed to deter airborne threat of any type. The missile is versatile and this feature increases its ability of inclusive fortification of naval assets against all type of airborne threats. The key features and capabilities of Barak-8 includes its long-range interception since its engagement range enables early detection and engagement of airborne threats. It can detect, track, intercept and

neutralize the threats miles away from the perimeter. The advanced surveillance and tracking radar system allows it to track and engage the target with precision and accuracy. The Barak-8 is one of the most flexible air defence system that can easily be deployed on any type of naval fleet unit and provides a multilayered defence system with ability to intercept the sea skimming missiles. India has equipped its destroyers, aircraft carrier and other corvettes with Israeli made Barak-8 surface to air (SAM) missiles (Zur, Magal, & Kedem, 2012).

BrahMos Supersonic Cruise Missile

BrahMos is a medium range supersonic cruise missile which can be launched either from surface, air, submarine, airborne units and land. It is believed as the world's fastest moving cruise missile in the world especially at the time it was first tested and introduced. The different versions of land and ship-launched missiles were in use for over a decade; however, the first air-launched version of BrahMos was first successfully tested in 2012 and came in service in 2019. Now the most advanced hypersonic versions are under observations and experimentation phases and expected to be tested by 2024 with a fast and accurate aerial strike capability. BrahMos is a joint venture of India and Russia. The first experience of launching this missile from a submarine was carried out on 20th March, 2013 in the Bay of Bengal by the Visakhapatnam submarine (Singh M. , 2024). India is continuously upgrading the sea-to-sea variant of BrahMos in close collaboration with Russia as well.

VL-SRSAM

VL-SRSAM is a Vertically Launched, Short Ranged Surface to Air Missile system commissioned and used by the Indian Navy. It is a fast, reactive and vertically launched surface to air missile system developed by the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of India (Rout, 2021). It was expected that the missile will replace the initial Barak-

1 surface to air missile in future. The missile is capable of neutralizing a number of diverse aerial threats of short and medium range with punitive accuracy and ensured 360-degree interception. The advanced technology ensures that this air defence shall be one response to all airborne threats and its second generation will warrant its maneuverability in all weathers.

MRSAM

The Medium Range Surface to Air Missile (MRSAM) is jointly developed by Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) of India and Aerospace Industries (IAI) of Israel for anti-ship targeting and interception of all the airborne threats including helicopters, aircrafts, drones and missiles (Rao, 2023). The MRSAM is a medium range missile covering not more than a distance between 50 to 70 kilometers. The missiles are remotely guided and operated with an advanced radar system enabling it for detection, accuracy and flawless identification of the target. MRSAM gives versatility to the Indian Navy and other armed services as well. In 2009, India signed a bilateral agreement with Russia for the development of MRSAM under a Rs. 10,000 crore project to replace IAF's ageing Soviet-made Pechora SAM missiles (Gross, 2019). The same shallow missiles are planned to be deployed on Project 15B destroyers and other naval ships.

5.7.2 Close in Weapon System (CIWS)

Close in Weapon System (CIWS) is an air defence system based on an automated gun that is designed with a purpose to provide close-range defence against anti-ship missiles, drones and aircrafts. It's a point defence system which contains radars, computers, sensors and multiple-barrel rotary firing cannons to detect short range incoming aircrafts or missiles and target them.

Kashtan CIWS

Kashtan Close in Weapon System (CIWS) is a modern Russian naval air defence system based on automatic gun and missile firing systems with swiftness and accuracy. Russia has deployed this advanced air defence system to its aircraft carriers and other main battle ships for its strategic defence. It ensures instantaneous hunting of airborne units with precision and punitive strikes. It provides defence against the lethal missiles, aircrafts, UAVs, guided bombs and other imminent airborne objects. It fires 4500 rounds per minute with deadly accuracy, computer controlled and radar guided system (Gupta P. , 2023). CIWS is a last line of defence against the airborne units coming near the ship. It fires rounds and missiles at high speed with deadly accuracy. The high speed and precision give this weapon an exception in the air defence system of the navy. It is pronounced as one of the most lethal weapons in the naval arsenal of any country. It helps in defending the objects from any airborne incursions to the ships.

5.7.3 Anti-Aircraft Guns

The primary purpose of anti-aircraft guns is to defend the naval assets from any type of airborne attacks including missiles and aircrafts. These guns are the vital units of the Indian Navy and are designed to quickly respond to the incoming object and deter it with a high caliber multiple barreled rotary cannon which synchronizes the firing sequence. The modern anti-aircraft guns are connected with radar for accuracy and punitive capabilities. In modern times, anti-aircraft guns are the most strategically important unit of the air defence system. They provide a strategic edge in close combat with the airborne units. They are used for point defence, deterrence and protection of naval units with reliability and steadfastness.

40 mm Automatic Gun L/70

The 40 mm automatic gun L/70 is a naval anti-aircraft gun used to deter airborne units in close combat. The gun can easily be used on different types of naval vessels to deter attack from helicopters, fighter jets, UAVs and anti-type missile attack. The gun has different type of ammunition for armor piercing and also with explosive material as well. The gun is capable of firing the rounds in fully automatic and articulated mode and ensures continuous firing until the ammunition is available and the trigger is engaged for firing. The rapid firing capabilities allow this gun to fire thousands of shells in seconds. India has been using this gun on its naval units and also on coastlines for the last two decades especially after the Mumbai attacks (Vyas, 2009). The guns are installed to counter attacks on the naval vessels and also on the Mumbai coastline. India is also using this gun its aircraft carriers, destroyers and other naval units as an air defence systems.

5.7.4 Electronic Warfare (EW) System

The electronic warfare (EW) System is based on the technology used to deceive, betray and disrupt the enemy aircrafts, helicopters and missiles from targeting the vital naval assets. The EW Systems are based on communication and radar systems that control and counters enemy airborne units from taking valuable targets. The Electronic Warfare (EW) System includes Radar Jamming System to jam the radars of enemy aircrafts, Electronic Support Measures (ESM) to detect and identify enemy aircrafts and Decoy system which confuses the enemy aircraft. The Communication Jamming Systems are also used to block the communication source and channel of the enemy aircraft with its base. India has signed a deal with Bharat Electronics Limited costing 250 crore Indian Rupees for the development and procurement of advanced equipment for naval warfare including advanced Electronic Warfare

System to ensure naval deterrence and sensor enabled fire detection system to safeguard its naval assets (Rautela, 2022).

Shakti

India has developed an Electronic Warfare (EW) System called **Shakti**. It is aimed to provide an electronic layer of protection and is developed with a purpose of interception, detection, classification, identification and jamming of conventional and modern radars (Negi M. , "PM Modi to hand over DRDO's electronic warfare system 'Shakti' to Indian Navy on Friday", 2021). The system is indigenously built by India as part of the Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO) at Defence Electronics Research Laboratory in Hyderabad. The program is equipped with one of the most advanced technologies employed by the Indian scientists that ensures the recording of data and close connection with the radar system.

5.8 Indian Naval Exercises

Indian Navy conducts naval exercises aimed to hone mobilization, enhance their professional skills and learn from the experiences of other navies. They help in learning new practices and procedures during warlike situations. Military diplomacy is an important tool of modern political strategy and statecraft. The bilateral and multilateral naval exercises are now going up like leaps and bounds with respect to complexity and quantity.

5.8.1 Malabar Naval Exercises (2015-2023)

The annual Malabar Naval Exercises (2015-2023) are involved and practiced among the United States, India and Japan as permanent members that includes submarine warfare, maritime interdiction operations, counter piracy and amphibious assault operations to modernize the combat skills of the navy. All the maritime war machines from corvettes to

aircraft carriers, navy's arm and navy's air defence system is deployed during the exercises. The primary objective of these naval exercises was to counter the increasing role of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), surface warfare medical evacuation and escorting (Iqbal A. , "US terms India, Japan natural partners as naval exercises begin", 2017).

5.8.2 VARUNA-223

The annual VARUNA-2023 are the bilateral naval exercises, which are practiced by India and France on the western seaboard. The exercises continued from 16th to 20th of January 2023 and included tactical maneuvers, air defence exercises, surface to air and different maritime escort and piracy operations (Anand, 2023). The naval exercises are mostly based on the typically practiced drills including, surface and submarine warfare, escort and evacuation missions, workshops and strategy courses, medical and rescue missions.

5.8.3 IN-BN CORPAT

IN-BN CORPAT are the joint naval patrolling exercises between India and Bangladesh which were undertaken along the international Maritime Boundary Line (IMBL) from 22nd May to 23rd May 2022. The exercises are mainly based on patrolling and traversing the coastlines in the Bay of Bengal and India Ocean. The drills increase the functional expertise of guarding and protecting the coastlines from external interventions and piracy.

5.8.4 JIMEX

The sixth edition of bilateral maritime exercises "JIMEX" were conducted from September 11, 2022 between India and Japan. The series of these naval exercises started in 2012, which marked the fifty years of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

5.8.5 AUSINDEX-21

Ausindex 21 are Indo-Australia joint naval exercises that were practiced from 6th to 10th of September 2021. The naval exercises included the Indian Destroyers, corvettes and recently commissioned diesel electric submarine of the Scorpene or Kalvari-class. India's deployment of submarines to Australia for naval drills reflects exceptional significance and extended demonstration of operational capability in that part of the world. India has inked a number of bilateral memorandums with Australia from training, joint exercises to transfer of technology and logistics under its comprehensive maritime cooperation (Panditt, 2023).

5.8.6 JGSDF-2023

The Indo-Japan Joint Training Exercise "Dharma Guardian" was conducted from 17th February to 02 March, 2023 in Shiga province, Japan. The troops of the Garhwal Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army and Japan Ground Self-Defence Force (JGSDF) have participated in the exercises to augment the best practices, strategic tactics and for integrated surveillance grids (Rajagopalan, 2023).

5.8.7 IMCOR

IMCOR are the bilateral naval exercises (series) between India and Myanmar, the exercises were conducted from 14th to 18th March, 2018 at port Blair, in the Bay of Bengal. Additionally, the two countries have also been come to an agreement to sign the (SOP) for India-Myanmar Coordinated Patrol (IMCOR) at the Tri-Service Headquarters in Port Blair in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands following the fourth iteration of their coordinated patrols (Parameshwaran, 2016).

5.8.8 Naseem Al-Bahar

In 2022, bilateral maritime naval exercises of the series titled Naseem Al Bahr were conducted between the Indian Navy (IN) and Royal Navy of Oman (RNO). The exercises

continued for five days at the coast of Oman from 19th to 24th November 2022. The exercises revealed the close relations of two countries and manifestation of bilateral static relations on trust and good will. The exercises were conducted to ensure the enhancement of bilateral relations, operations on harbor and a biennial report between the two countries (Shah R. , 2023).

5.8.9 INDRA NAVY

In 2023, joint maritime exercises titled “INDRA NAVY” were conducted between India and Russia. This series of bilateral naval exercises started in 2003 and was tasked to boost bilateral cooperation in naval strategy, security, and boosting cooperation between the two countries. These exercises were carried out in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

5.8.10 SLINEX

In 2022, the bilateral naval exercises titled “SLINEX” were conducted between India and Sri Lanka from 7th to 10th March, 2023 at the Bay of Bengal and also at Trincomalee, Sri Lanka. In these exercises four ships and two aircrafts from Sri Lanka and two ships and one P-8I Orion maritime reconnaissance and domain awareness participated. In these exercises, Sri Lanka fielded an offshore patrol vessel and a training ship while India brought two indigenously built corvettes, along with onboard helicopters and an indigenously built Dornier 228 short-range maritime reconnaissance aircraft (Rej, 2020).

5.8.11 CORPAT

In 2021, the 31st edition of “Indo-Thai CORPAT” took place from 12 to 14 November 2021. The exercises were conducted between the Indian Navy and the Royal Thai Navy. The exercises are three day, bi-annually Indo-Thai naval patrol exercises in which Indian offshore patrol vessel Saryu and Thailand’s Krabi patrol vessel has participated (Sharma R. , 2021). Dornier patrol aircraft also accompanied the patrol ships of two countries. The exercises were

aimed to enhance the professional capabilities of patrolling and guarding the offshore and to learn from the experiences of each other.

5.8.12 KONKAN

“Konkan” exercises are the annual bilateral naval exercises between the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom and the Indian Navy. Multiple naval drills, piracy operations, anti-submarine warfare and other exercises covers almost all the domains of air, surface, subsurface and underwater operations. These exercises are aimed to increase professional viability of the navies and to ensure maritime security. The two forces integrated within their groups with exercises including replenishment at sea approaches, air direction and strike operations with fighter aircrafts (MiG 29Ks and F35Bs and helicopters (Sea King, Chetak and Wildcat) transiting through war at sea scenarios (Bose, 2021).

5.9 Conventional Security Dilemmas for Pakistan

India is rapidly modernizing its naval capabilities and due to a longstanding strategic standoff with Pakistan can lead to a numerous traditional security challenges for Pakistan. The tensions between the two countries have a long and complicated history, rooted in the partition of subcontinent. The subsequent conflicts between the two countries have resulted in threatening the regional peace and ultimately nuclearization of South Asia.

5.9.1 Strategic Deterrence and Second-Strike Capabilities

The Indian naval modernization does pose a strategic challenge to Pakistan with regard to the strategic deterrence and second-strike capabilities. The most of the nuclear power countries including USA, Russia and China have developed their sea-based second strike capability which gives a reasonable strategic deterrence and also maintain credible military power. It is an assured ability of responding to a nuclear attack under adverse circumstance with punitive retaliation. It ensure the mutual destruction which is an important source of

balancing the power. India's naval superiority gives it an edge in maintaining an alternate source for second strike. India currently enjoys superior survival ability and endurance in terms of its nuclear weapons which can be used through nuclear submarines, aircraft carriers, destroyers or other vessels with supersonic missiles including Brahmos.

5.9.2 Naval Blockade Threats

A naval blockade involves preventing the enemy state from using the sea lanes of communication as trade route, travel and choking its key strategic points which are used for imports and exports of the country. Pakistan's 90% trade is based on its maritime channels, any blockage or interruption to its naval routes can lead to huge energy, economic and strategic crisis. This makes it highly vulnerable to any interruption of maritime traffic and movement. The naval blockade threats are indeed very important and strategically harmful for any adversary at any stage. India can use blockade threat as a leverage against Pakistan at the time of any conflict or war, moreover it can also isolate Karachi and Gwadar port and target it at any stage. It can result in difficulty and restriction in military logistics, ammunition and weapons.

India's naval modernization can enable India to achieve this objective in many ways, for instance, it can use INS Vikrant or INS Vishal to project air power far beyond the shores without engaging closes on maritime borders. It will be very effective in sea and aerial denial mission in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) and Arabian Sea. Secondly, India can also deploy its nuclear powered or diesel-electric submarines, the former one will have long submerged endurance during mission and will be a potent threat to Pakistan. Due to its stealth capabilities, it can operationally deployed near Karachi or Gwadar port for surveillance and reconnaissance purposes. India's P-8I Poseidon aircraft, MQ9-Sea Guardian, INS Rukmini and UAVs can

pose threat and also be deployed for sea blockade. India's missile surfaced fleet including destroyers, corvettes, frigates and other small boats are also a potent threat and can be used for the purpose of sea blockade.

5.9.3 Surveillance and Intelligence Dominance

The surveillance and intelligence gathering is another most significant element of India's Naval Modernization that poses maritime threat and growing strategic challenge to Pakistan. The surveillance and intelligence dominance includes the information of enemy's naval assets, detect maritime deployment and track their maritime movements. These capabilities are essential for Early Warning Systems, Effective Targeting and decision pertaining to force deployment. India's deployment of advanced vessels, electronic warfare system and increased naval posturing has enabled it remarkably to dominate the regional waters. They poses direct threats to Pakistan's maritime interests and also a great challenge for its naval assets. The excessive Indian investments in its defence production and rapidly modernizing naval assets has reduced Pakistan's strategic ambiguity and raised concerned for its operational security.

5.9.4 Regional Encirclement

The regional encirclement is an important traditional security challenge for Pakistan because India's naval modernization is coincided with its maritime strategy of increasing the footprints in the IOR and beyond. India is countering China by engaging with the littoral countries. China has adopted String of pearls strategy which isolates Indian ports as it has started developing ports in Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan and Oman. In response to that India has adopted the strategy named "the Necklace of Diamond" and according to that strategy India has also started developing its ports in friendly countries including Oman, Iran, Indonesia, Mauritius, Reunion Island (France) and Seychelles. India's strategic partnership

with these countries and development of naval bases with intelligence sharing agreements with some of these countries have led to new traditional security concerns for Pakistan. Pakistan cannot match ship to ship and gun to gun with India rather it can counter its strategic and traditional threat by asymmetric tactics and irregular strategic means.

5.9.5 Technological Gap

Technological gap is also one of the most persistent challenge to Pakistan with respect to Indian naval modernization. It affects every aspect of naval warfare, from surveillance to detection, from defence to offense, carrying out precision strikes, sea denials and maritime domain awareness. Pakistan is far behind India in all these areas which brings Pakistan to a position of strategic disadvantageous positions. it includes both situations a the time of war and also during the peacetime deterrence. It is basically a disparity in the naval system integration, weapons, software and hardware of the two navies. Pakistan is far behind India in terms of quality and quantity of the naval arsenal. India has attained self-sufficiency and qualitative edge in surveillance, surface and underwater warfare, electronic warfare and asymmetrical tactics.

5.9.6 Challenges to CPEC, Gwadar and Karachi

Indian naval modernization directly and indirectly poses threats to Gwadar and Karachi. This is due to the reason that India has developed a huge conventional navy and deployed in the blue waters of IOR and beyond. The primary purpose of deploying such a huge navy is to project power abroad and also India has a large coastline which requires a big navy to safeguard. Besides that India also wants to dominate the region and influence the strategic environment of IOR. The Indian naval modernization possess direct threat to Gwadar and Karachi and also to its component i.e., China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). These ports are become a symbol of strategic partnership between China and Pakistan, India has employed

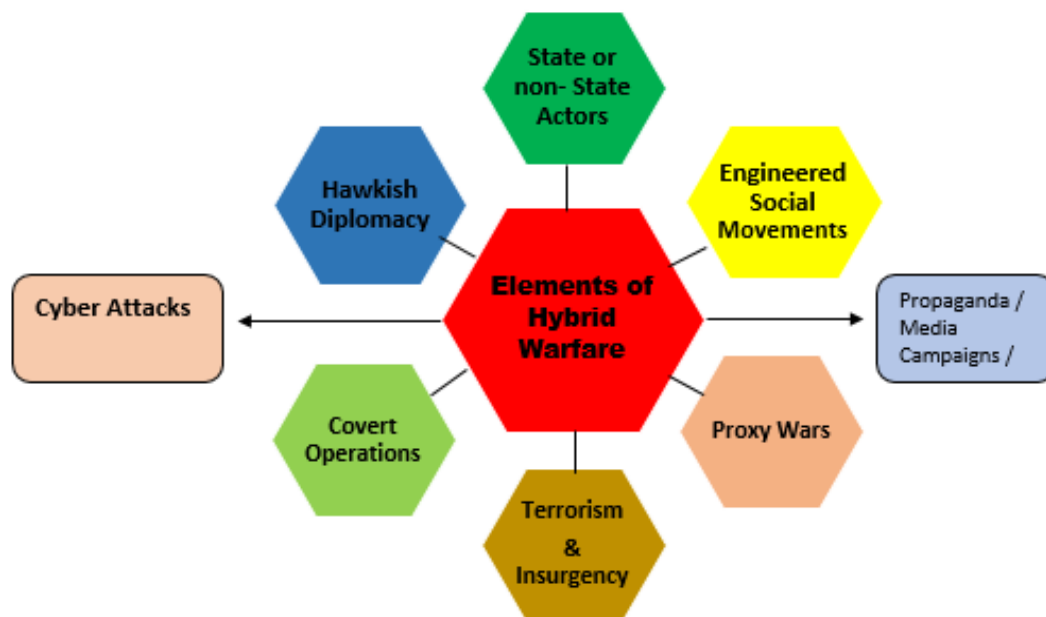
several covert strategies to sabotage these projects. Moreover, the Indian statements and regional naval deployment reflects that it can hit these ports at the time of any conflict with Pakistan. The direct hit on any of the ports can pave its way towards a full scale escalation between the two countries because these ports are lifeline for Pakistan's economy. Pakistan requires to develop a comprehensive maritime strategy to defend its maritime interests, assets and trade routes from India's asymmetric strategies and hawkish movies.

Chapter-6

6. Non-Traditional Security Challenges for Pakistan

6.1 A Theoretical Discourse on the Concept of Hybrid Warfare

In the modern times the political and strategic objectives are achieved not only through the traditional means of kinetic Warfare with weapons and tactics but by other means like intelligence gathering, propaganda, proxy wars, aggressive diplomacy and economic coercion. The deployment of all these tools is essential for a nation to win against an adversary and safeguard its vital national interests. With the passage of time, the advancement in the strategy of warfighting and modernization of weapons has dramatically changed strategic discourse of war. Likewise, this particular transformation has also changed the traditional battlefields and now the war is expanded from grounds to the minds of the nation. The war is decisively waged and fought in the minds of the enemy nation through propaganda and in the minds of its own nation by motivating their will to achieve victory. Hybrid warfare is one of the most lethal strategies than all other non-traditional strategies. It employs other military capabilities including protracted insurgency using proxy armies, ambushes, improvised explosive devices, and assassination (Hoffman, 2007).



Source: Author's own explanation of Hybrid Warfare

The Hybrid warfare combines a number of irregular tactics which works side by side with the conventional strategy, for instance,

i. **State & non-state actors:** The state actor is the regular military, intelligence agencies and other institutions which can play a role in engaging war against enemies, whereas sometimes the non-state actors including terrorist organization, criminals, cyber criminals, militias and paramilitary groups are sponsored for terrorist activities against enemies.

ii. **Engineered Social Movements:** Sometimes countries back insurgencies and stage protest against the enemy states by engineering social movements through Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) or media platforms. The social movements can lead to smooth transition of power (Sharp, 1993).

iii. **Proxy Wars:** It is a main tool of any state to achieve strategic objective by minimizing direct engagement in war. It help in avoiding direct escalation and accountability. The strategy is effectively successful in today's geopolitical environment with a powerful enemy.

iv. **Terrorism & Insurgency:** The act of terrorism is an effective tool of modern hybrid warfare employed by both state and non-state actors. It help in achieving high result with low operation cost and with minimum loss. It creates fear, weaken enemy morale and disrupt proper governance for separation.

v. **Covert Operation:** The covert operations is a core tactic in hybrid warfare to achieve maximum strategic objective. The intelligence agencies and special units of militaries secretly carry out such operations to neutralize the high value targets. Sometimes the proxy groups are backed, trained and funded to stage insurgency or sabotage an adversary while maintaining plausible deniability.

vi. **Hawkish Diplomacy:** It can also be an important tool of hybrid warfare. It is in fact a strategy of involving aggressive and uncompromising tactics of engaging with the enemy state. It is a confrontation style which is coincided with the military threats and lobbying in the regional and international stage for the diplomatic isolation of the enemy state.

vii. **Cyber Attacks:** The cyber-attacks are considered as the most versatile tools in hybrid warfare. The primary aims of employing this tactic is to disrupt, degrade and dominate the enemy in the political, economic and military arena. The country with such ability and achieve the most valued national interests without pointing a gun or firing a single bullet on its enemy.

viii. **Propaganda / Media Campaigns / Fake News:** The propaganda and fake news are used for manipulating the perception and creating confusion among the masses. It helps in disrupting the minds of the people against their institutions, armed forces and political regime. It is an affective tactic of weakening the government and the institutions without engaging directly under information warfare, a key component of hybrid warfare.

According to the scholar, it is quite arguable what type of threat can be pronounced as a hybrid threat and what does not. Moreover, there is only a very little substantial agreement on the point of its nature and existence. Otherwise, there is an enormous diversity in the tactical strategies of hybrid war. The states deploy certain hybrid war tactics for the extension of their political and economic interests. Frank Hoffman was the first to explain the term Hybrid Warfare for the use of conventional war strategy with other asymmetrical, psychological and non-conventional methods.

The Russian incursion in Ukraine and Crimea during the last decade and Hezbollah's guerilla fighting against the Zionist regime in South Lebanon during the Lebanon-Israel war

(2006) and their role in the Syrian Civil war are examples of hybrid war and non-linear warfare in the modern times. Hezbollah is considered one of the most formidable and punitive forces trained in irregular and non-linear warfare that has effectively resisted Israeli's incursions in the region since 2000. Hybrid warfare is one of the most viable strategies and formidable approaches to attain certain objectives.

6.1.1. Execution of Hybrid War by India after 2008

Hybrid warfare is a military strategy which has blurred the lines of war and blends conventional military tactics with irregular war strategy that includes cyber-attack, guerrilla warfare, disinformation and guerrilla tactics. The strategy is aimed to engage a war executed for state and non-state actors working together. The internal and external vulnerabilities of a country are exploited for the execution of hybrid war.

The South Asian region is one of the most important regions in terms of geostrategy and conflict due to its unique geopolitical landscape coupled with security and political challenges. The reason for concern is due to geostrategic proximity of three nuclear powers of the region i.e., China, India and Pakistan and their longstanding territorial conflicts and claims. The consistent territorial disputes pose existential threats and issues pertaining to security of the region. These are the sincere apprehensions of the region that can unfold strategic challenges. The concurrent situations have resulted in the deep division among the countries based on their vital national interests and foreign policy objectives.

Pakistan is a country with mixed layers of internal and external vulnerabilities. They stem from a variety of factors including governance issues, economic uncertainty, energy crisis and corruption are major evils in the country that are coincided by the activation of fault-lines

in Pakistan. There are three fault-lines in Pakistan i.e., sectarian, ethnic and sub-ethnic faultiness. India has activated them especially after 2008 by sponsoring non-state actors and sectarian groups in the country. However, Pakistan has focused mainly on the external challenges and tried to concentrate more on the conventional threats and disparities.

6.1.2. The Implication of Indian Hybrid Warfare on Pakistan

The post May 1998 era has changed the strategic dynamics of the South Asian region, as India and Pakistan both went nuclear and Pakistan's conventional disparity was overcome by its nuclear capabilities. Moreover, the threat of direct intervention between the two neighbours facing long-lasting unresolved territorial conflict was reduced. However, it led to the new dimensions of conflict because India has successfully employed all the available elements of non-kinetic warfare to destabilize Pakistan (Nisar M. , 2022). Moreover, the nature and dynamics of Pakistan's hybrid war challenges are entirely different from the other countries and the country has been exposed to a number of asymmetrical challenges for the last twenty years. The security challenges that posed existential threats to the integrity of the country came from a broad spectrum of elements including sectarian, ethnic, sub-ethnic and private socio-political organizations funded by the foreign donors for their political ends. The Indian backed insurgent groups of local origin including Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) are activating different ethno-religious fault-lines in the country to destabilize Pakistan. These actors do not confine to the non-state actors rather they include state actors as well which pose political and socio-economic implications for them with adverse impact. The former secretary of State, Mike Pompeo has openly warned Pakistan when Pakistan announced the CPEC, a project for regional economic integration. India started taking steps to sabotage and halt the project by several means (Rashid, 2017).

The new dimensions of Hybrid Warfare have changed the blending of conventional competencies, terrorism, cyber-attacks, proxies and propaganda to create anti state rhetoric among the masses. They help in dismantling the national cohesion and harmony among the people. The adversaries and enemy segments are mostly using propaganda as a strategy of information warfare against the armed forces and institutions of Pakistan. The manipulation of information and organized disinformation undermines public trust in institutions. The more lethal strategy could be in the form of cyber-attacks on the databases of military networks to steal classified information and these attacks can be used to destroy the systems of key installations and malfunction. Pakistan has suffered a number of cyber-attacks on different installations. The activation of proxy war, training, arming and financing of insurgent groups is another example of this hybrid war. The diplomatic encirclement, political and economic pressure and isolation is another important example and strategy of hybrid warfare. India has employed these strategies against Pakistan especially proxy war and spread of propaganda and misinformation globally and some political parties have created this environment against armed forces (Nisar M. H., 2023).

6.1.3 The Establishment of Technical Support Division (TSD) since 2008

In the post 1998 era, India has adopted Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), a strategy to launch offensive operations against Pakistan with the help of its Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs) aimed to paralyze the entire country. The idea of CSD was borrowed from Germany's Blitzkrieg or "the lightning war" strategy introduced by Hitler, which was basically a swift and overwhelming force concentration to completely paralyze the enemy country to respond or strike back (Citino, 1999). However, due to India's inability to functionalize the Cold Start Doctrine. India adopted a covert strategy to retaliate and avenge the 2008 Mumbai attacks by

Lashkar-e-Tayyaba (LeT) militants. India established the responsibility on Pakistan and decided to avenge the LeT leadership by terrorist attacks inside Pakistan.

In response to 26/11 Mumbai attacks, the Indian defence minister gave instructions to create covert capabilities in the inner circle of LeT to execute shallow operations deep inside Pakistan to take high value targets. The Unit had operational authorization from the Chief of the Army Staff General V.K. Singh, Vice Chief and RAW Chief. Furthermore, an Indian Army officer has admitted that the main task of the Indian intelligence agency was to counter ISI by establishing connections and infiltrate in the inner circles of Hafiz Saeed to carry out his assassination (Baweja, 2013). TSD carried out a number of operations in IH Kashmir and inside Pakistan including **Operation Rehber I, II & III** in IHK, **Operation Seven Sisters** in (Northeast) and **Operation Deep Strike** (Pakistan). These operations were highly secretive and the details of the operations remained classified and inaccessible for the public. However, the allegations remained in media for provoking militancy in the country and India countered the contention with the same blame.

The operationalization of these actions increased with their alleged sustenance, financing and training to the militant groups in Baluchistan. India activated sectarian and ethnic faultiness in Baluchistan by financing Lashkar e Jhangvi (LeJ), Sipah e Sahaba (SSP) and Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA). The apprehension of Kulbushan Yadav unveiled new dynamics of hybrid war and Indian covert operations inside Pakistan. Kulbushan Yadav confessed that he was an officer in Indian Naval intelligence and before departing for Chahbahar he apparently joined TSD in 2011. In Chahbahar he was living with a code name Hussain Mubarak Patel. His deployment in Baluchistan was proposed to sabotage CPEC and

create mayhem in Baluchistan. His presence unleashed a new wave of violence and target killings in Karachi and Baluchistan.

General V. K. Sing after retirement from military service contested election from Ghaziabad and won with a majority vote (Dinda, 2014). General Sing's believed as a hawkish person in the Indian military and his entrance in the political corridors reflects a new era of political decision making.

6.1.4. Doval Doctrine – a Defensive-Offense Doctrine of Ajit Doval

Ajit Doval served as National Security Advisor (NSA) in the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) government and was tasked to curb insurgency in Kashmir and to neutralize its alleged support from Pakistan. He served as Intelligence Bureau (IB) chief and in the police service. He had a strategically radical approach in dealing with violence. He introduced a full band of strategy, the “fourth generation warfare” in which the civil society could be “subverted, sub-normed, divided and manipulated by the enemy state (Subramanian, 2021). Ajit Doval is an experienced spy and trusted officer of Narendra Modi to execute his hawkish strategy inside Pakistan. Moreover, he has three very imperative operations in his profile: the Operation Black Thunder (1988), Rescue of 46 Indian National in Iraq (2015) and Operation Hot Pursuit (2015) in Myanmar (Joshi, 2015).

Ajit Doval described his security strategy in dealing with the security threats at following three levels. Firstly, at **Defensive mode**, in which he said, “we will work at the domestic level and make India internally strong enough to cope with external threats”. Secondly, at **Defensive-offense mode** in which “India has to go to the place from where the threat is coming from and neutralize it there”. Thirdly, by **Offensive mode** in which “you go

for direct intervention with force but rightly and timely”. However, when it comes to China and Pakistan the Offensive Mode is not applicable due to nuclear capabilities and it prevents India from using extreme force. Therefore, according to Doval doctrine the ***Defensive-Offense Mode*** aims to exploit the vulnerabilities of Pakistan by activating the fault-lines within the country. The fault-lines activated by India include the sectarian, ethnic and sub-ethnic. Moreover, it also includes other strategies like diplomatic, political, economic and diplomatic isolation at regional and international levels.

India does not necessarily attribute to practice morality in war and this is what has been documented even in their ancient scripture. Morality or ethics play a very circumscribed role in the political thought of Indian Strategist thinkers. At several instances in history the fingerprints of Indian secret war strategies are found which emphasizes that India is involved in employing covert strategies to create political instability in Pakistan. In 1971, Indian intervention created an impossible strategic situation that ultimately led to the fall of Dhaka. RAW secretly trained Makti Bahini for six months with guerilla fighting skill and fomented an insurgency in East Pakistan. It further started border skirmishes that gradually turned into bloody attacks on Pakistani troops (Fakhar-e-Alam, 2021). India has opened a full theatre of war on Pakistan until it ended up with the instrument of surrender signed between Lt. General Niazi and Lt. General Jagjit Singh Arora, GOC of Eastern Command.

The policies of the Indian government, their political statements reflect that they are committed to practice what Ajit Doval has prescribed as sustenance of national interest through terrorism in the region. Moreover, it raised Pakistan’s distress and apprehension on India’s immersion in cross-border terrorism. Subsequently, it is a proven fact that India is backing separatist elements to execute radical actions in the country to weaken it internally. Manohar

Parrikar, the Indian Defence Minister and National Security Advisor to Narendra Modi has recently given remarks that “terrorists have to be neutralized only through terrorists” (Hussain S. , 2015). The statement in itself is a matter of great apprehension not only for Pakistan but for the entire region. It proved that India would never miss a chance to manipulate any opportunity that could help India to internally destabilize Pakistan. India’s strategic adventurism against Pakistan can unleash a huge conflict in the region since the two countries possess a huge firepower. This arms capability and presence of nuclear weapons have diminished the threat of a full-fledged war. Therefore, the bilateral conflict will not remain confined to their borders but it will engulf and consume the entire region.

During Narendra Modi’s state visit to Dhaka in 2015, the PM addressed the students and said that “Pakistan constantly disturbs India, creates nuisances, and stokes terrorism... terror incidents keep on happening” (Yousaf, 2015). He further vowed to work jointly for defence and security cooperation between the two countries. India’s urge to Bangladesh for defence cooperation and counter terrorism reflects that India is still working on isolating Pakistan diplomatically by portraying it as a country which exports terrorism abroad. Modi diverted the world’s attention from their atrocities in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) and their alleged support in Baluchistan. Consequently, during the Independence Day speech in 2016, they menaced Pakistan that if it continued its policies India will be compelled to expose Islamabad’s wrongdoings in the region (Razdan & Shukla, 2016).

Although the induction of nuclear weapons in the two countries have diminished the threat of full-scale war between the two countries. However, the modernization of India’s weapons and strategy are dramatically changing the deterrence stability of the region. This is because India is increasing the number of long endurance UAVs, IAF Rafale, Su-30MKI, P8-

Orion surveillance aircraft, advanced helicopters, very sophisticated missiles and air defence systems. Moreover, the adoption of Cold Start Doctrine and Joint Doctrine of Indian Armed Forces reflects that India is preparing for limited and low yield operations against Pakistan. It will help in achieving its national interests with swift operations by deploying Integrated Battle Groups (IBGs). However, Pakistan's economic vulnerability and unavailability of such sophistication in arms may lead to a full-fledged war and expand its scope. Because it will defend its national interest by any mean and it may escalate the war to the nuclear ladder.

The political ideologies (theories) or international geopolitical frameworks are believed as a central construct in the strategic paradigm of a country. The ideological construct often plays a pivotal role in the formulation and execution of strategies in a particular manner. Moreover, the development and modernization of political and military strategies have complicated the geo-strategy. They have made the policies more complex and multilayered. Thus, the theoretical grounds for the hybrid war can be traced from the ancient scriptures of *Arthashastra* in which even the offensive diplomacy and alliances are claimed as a part of war. India's intervention with an offensive diplomacy with its immediate neighbours is a foundation of disruptive geopolitics in the region. India is providing substantive military aid, counterinsurgency training and financial assistance to Afghanistan. In October 2011, India signed a comprehensive Strategic Partnership (SPA) with the Afghan government representing another shift, the SPA indicated New Delhi's willingness to depart from its traditional policy of boycotting the Afghan Taliban (Paliwal, 2017). On the other side India's diplomatic engagement with Iran, UAE and Saudi Arabia is a true manifestation of Kautilya's "*Raj Mandala Theory*". The theory explains that the state is always encircled with the enemy states which hinder the expansion of the states, which can be neutralized with another circle of

national friends. The states which encircle the enemy state can be manipulated for the own national interests.

India has also changed its foreign policy towards Sri Lanka in fighting against Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). A seeming change of heart, this was to keep Pakistan and China from getting too close to Sri Lanka militarily (Liebenberg, Kruijt, & Paranjpe, 2020). India is also providing technical support to Iran for developing the Chahbahar port that will provide India access and naval presence in the Arabian Sea.

6.2 India's CPEC Cell i.e., running US \$500 million Cell to Sabotage CPEC

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is designated to connect the two countries with robust infrastructure of roads, railway and energy corridor. On one side, the corridor will facilitate the flow of energy resources from the Middle East, especially Iran to China and on the other side, it will connect the rest of the world with China. China needs access to the Arabian Sea to export and trade with the rest of the world. China desires to access markets for its rapidly increasing goods. It is a worthy project with mammoth potential and immensely beneficial for the entire region.

Pakistan's engagement with China on the said project is strategically imperative since it will provide China access to Arabian Sea and simultaneously it will bring financial stability in Pakistan. The CPEC passes through Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan, a strategically important region and a significant cause of disagreement between India and Pakistan. In order to sabotage the project and keep Pakistan away from the material benefits of the project India has employed a strategy of hybrid war. India is in the pursuit to weaken the country internally to sabotage the CPEC project. As the issue was already deliberated earlier in India's Hybrid War strategy against Pakistan.

India is indirectly intervening in Pakistan through its funded banned organizations including BLA, TTP and other sub-national and sectarian organizations including Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ). In order to operationally organize and manage these activities India has set up a Baluchistan operation cell under RAW to devise a radical force for subversion and terrorist activities in the province (Report, 2017). India is aiming to develop strong military power by adding Pakistan-centric force potential by conventional and non-conventional means. They are sponsoring terrorist groups to stage violence in the strategically important parts of Baluchistan to sabotage China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Moreover, they are also targeting Chinese engineers in Karachi and Baluchistan. The Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee (CJCSC) General Zubair Mehmood Hayat said that India is aiming to sabotage the multi-billion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project through its premier intelligence agency RAW (Desk, 2017).

In the pursuit of achieving the vital targets RAW has not only established a separate CPEC Cell but additionally they have tasked a deep cover RAW Operators including Kulbhushan Jadhav to operationalize the strategy in its true spirit. India in collaboration with Afghan NDS has established three consulates in Afghanistan in Jalalabad, Kandhar and Mazar Sharif are backing and providing other logistical support to carry out subversive activities in FATA, Baluchistan and Karachi (Haider, 2016). This is due to the reason that the hostile intelligence agencies of neighbouring countries are opposed to CPEC and they are actively involved in destabilizing Pakistan. The CPEC increases Chinese influence in the region and it frustrates India that also wants to increase its hegemonic role in the region. Secondly, the CPEC passes through the disputed region of Kashmir and India expressed its antagonism because the project hinders Indian ambitions in the region. They know that Gwadar is not only important

for CPEC but also vital for Afghanistan and Central Asia since they had also been connected to the traditional silk route. Now, India fears that if they did not engage Afghanistan in strategic relations, it may get close to Pakistan.

6.3 Attack on P3 Orion at PNS Mehran Base

On 22nd May, 2011, a small group of terrorists associated with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan sneaked into the Pakistan Navy's Airbase PNS Mehran and destroyed two P3 Orion surveillance and reconnaissance aircraft and one was partially damaged. The terrorist attack was swift and deadly which had held off the entire base for 15 hours and ended up with a deadly gun battle at early dawn. At least 10 military personnel were killed in the line of duty. The investigations revealed that four terrorists were involved in the attack and they carried out a surveillance operation near the base for over many months. The base was heavily guarded and well defended and this attack was not possible without the help from inside the base. It was also reported that during the attack the closed circuited cameras installed in the base were not functioning.

Each unit price of P3 Orion anti-submarine aircraft was worth US\$ 36 million and were commissioned in the Pakistan Navy for anti-submarine warfare. The aircraft is equipped with an upgraded version of maritime surveillance radar and FLIR System Star SAFIRE II thermal imager (Ghosh, 2021). India is gradually increasing naval presence near Pakistan's waters. Moreover, India is illicitly perpetuating its naval exercises, patrol and surveillance operations in the region with nuclear submarines having long endurance. On a number of occasions, Indian submarine presence was observed in the close waters of Gwadar and Pasni region. Scorpene-class submarine INS Kalvari was "detected and localized" in Pakistan's Exclusive

Economic Zone, some 86 nautical miles from Gwadar and the detection was done by P-3 Orion aircraft in Pakistan Navy's fleet (Syed B. S., 2019).

Consequently, the deployment of P3 Orion aircraft enabled the Pakistan Navy to cope with any threat of submarine warfare. The submarine intervention could have been intercepted and neutralized, however Pakistan's policy to of restrain to give peace another chance prevented it from carrying out such operation.

The major cause of the Mehran base attack was described that the attack was carried out in retaliation of *Operation Neptune Spear*, the target killing operation carried out for the assassination of the Al-Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden (Cooper, 2011). It was one of the most extensive and infuriating manhunts that changed the entire strategic discourse of the region with its strategic implication on "War on Terror". The incident showed that Karachi is a staging point of terrorism and the terrorists' organization and their handlers have stepped into maritime terrorism. Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) commander Ehsanullah Ehsan assumed responsibility for the attack in retaliation for targeting al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden and almost 15-20 terrorists have ambushed the base with advanced weapons (Jung, Khan, & Haque, 2011). Although the attack was carried out by the local terrorist organization based in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), but eventually the technical and financial support was provided by RAW or CIA. The stimulant for both can be testified that Indian has allegedly supported TTP to target P3 Orion that pose a serious threat to its submarines in blue waters. Secondly, the US support is also possible to prove Pakistan essentially an inept and weak state in terms of security.

The INS Mehran base attack was not the first attack of its type. In 2002, another incident of maritime terrorism took place when a car bomb was blown up in which 14 people were killed including 11 French Naval engineers and 23 others were injured. The bomb was blown near Sheraton hotel where a car was rammed into a 46-seater Pakistan navy bus (Vick, 2002).

6.4 Volatility in Baluchistan

Baluchistan province is geographically spanning Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Persian Gulf region. Due to unique geostrategic positioning, overall socio-political, economic grievances, and governance issues, the province has been the center of instability, mayhem and havoc since 1947. The main cause of this uncertainty and conflict is the multiethnic composition of the province. It reflects the precarious and unpredictable nature of the internal situation of the province. Due to the unprecedented situations, the province has suffered insurgency and violence between the federal government and locals. It caused economic uncertainty, political chaos and many other social evils in the province.

6.4.1 Geostrategic Significance of Baluchistan

Baluchistan is indeed the largest province of Pakistan in terms of landmass and comprises 44 percent of the country's land territory. It is not only the largest province in terms of landmass but it is also the biggest in terms of the plethora of crises. Energy starved country's Baluchistan province is immensely rich in natural resources including oil, gas, copper, gold and other minerals with strategically very important geographical location. It is connected with the Arabian Sea and Strait of Hormuz with Gwadar port. Strait of Hormuz is a significant place that is situated between Persian Gulf and Gulf of Oman and is one of the most important strategic choke points. It is believed as the world's most important transit choke point because

a third of the world's total liquefied natural gas and almost 25 percent of total global oil consumption passes through this strait (Ward, 2019). The US Navy's fifth fleet is stationed in Bahrain to control the waves. Now China's \$55 billion project the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is currently in progress and soon it will ripe its fruit.

Although the province is important in exceptional geostrategic appearance and rich with natural resources, it is subject to instability and insurgency due to many factors. Baluchistan's vulnerabilities include marginalization, bad governance, religious extremism, ethnic problems, underdevelopment and socio-economic uncertainties. These evils have resulted in making Baluchistan the most impoverished and penurious province of Pakistan with the largest number of underdeveloped districts.

6.4.2. Baluch Nationalist Struggle is Different from the Past

The insurgency in Baluchistan has been started since the creation of Pakistan. The first Baluch movement started on the issue pertaining to the annexation in 1948. The second nationalist insurgency (1962-69) started during the Ayub Khan's era. The Marri and Bugti Sardars emerged during this period due to their political struggle against the martial regime of Ayub Khan. The third Baluch insurgency was the result of suspension of a coalition government formed by National Awami party and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam by Bhutto and later it resulted in starting of security operations in Baluchistan (1974-77). The government cracked down in Baluchistan due to the alleged funding of Iraq to stage insurgency in Baluchistan. The fourth wave of insurgency started after the assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti in 2006 by the Musharaf regime.

The Baloch nationalist movements resulted in different political developments and raised different consequences in the country that are relatively different from the rest. The

Pashtuns and Sindhis have been co-opted in the mainstream politics, whereas the Baluch remained marginalized. The nationalist struggles of Sindhis, Muhajir and Pashtuns have led to different political discourse unlike Baluch. They managed to turn the strategic struggle into a political movement and reach the political corridors of the country. The seven decades long political struggle remained unable to turn into a forged political movement enabling the marginalized people to be the part of political decision-making. The Baluch people do show their discontent on the matter that their movements have brutally been exterminated and were not given a platform to address their grievances and were labelled as ‘miscreants’, ‘separatists’ and ‘anti-state’ (Ahmer, 2016).

6.4.3. Ethnocentricity and Sardari System: Socio-Political Framework of Baluchistan

The ethnic and tribal affiliation is an important factor of major developing societies for shaping, reshaping and serves as a source of intimacy and segregation in the society. The opposed behaviour of these ethnic and sectarian segments of the society sometimes become a source of violence and ferocities. Ethnocentrism’s worldview is to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one’s own race; this is the major cause of social segregation and political defragmentation. The one aspect of ethnocentrism believes that one particular ethnic culture or race is superior to all other groups; it deserves more prominence and requires to dominate others. This particular point of view often leads to deceitful and biased assumptions about the norms, values and socio-political identity. In a particular situation, one ethnic group can often see, observe and believe other ethnic identities as wrong or immoral due to their variance from others. Ethnocentricity works sometimes as a centripetal force by uniting the people on similar grounds and sometimes it works as a centrifugal force in some societies by creating segregation and apartheid like situations. The forcibly compelling other groups to a

particular code of life or adopting a specific culture or ideology leads to oppression and manipulation. Cultural relativism can reduce such a situation to a degree by understanding the importance of tolerating other cultures. It can help in developing an understanding of other cultures and thwart off the rigidity among the societies.

Pakistan is a multiethnic and multicultural society that has already suffered a lot from this ethnic diversity. In 1971, India activated the ethnic fault in East Pakistan by manipulating their political deprivation and cultural emotions. It led to the disintegration of the country. The likely situation has later been created in other parts of Pakistan for instance, by starting ethnic politics in Karachi, Baluchistan and other parts of the country. The longest discourteous episode of ethnic vehemence has been observed in the case of Baluchistan. The political and military institutions of Pakistan have been stigmatized and resulted in the distrust of the people. The political decision-making has resulted in raising the warmth suspicions among the people.

The precedents of separatist elements have been evolved strategically by allying with the other armed groups of other provinces like with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) and sectarian groups for increased exploitation and resurgence. Although the origin of separatist struggle of Baluch nationalists' dates backs to the creation of Pakistan in 1947, however, the modern struggle that was started after 2000 has rapidly changed the strategic discourse. During the military rule of Pervez Musharraf and assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti has transformed the pulse of events into a new pace. The separatist groups became more organized, equipped and calculated in their operations. The year 2015 observed the peak of terrorist events by Baloch insurgents, however this number came down from 194 in 2015 to 51 in 2019 (Pervez, 2020).

The socio-political structure of Baluchistan is based on the Sardari System. The Sardars (tribal chiefs) have great influence in the political affairs of the people. The government's support and backing of Sardars is an inherited practice that dates back to the colonial period. The British Raj has legalized the authority of Sardars on their subjects loyal to their colonial masters. The British colonial system provided full support to the tribal ruling class under the Frontier Crimes Regulations Act (1901) and backed the Sardars loyal to the Raj (Fazl-e-Haider, 2012). The political elites of Pakistan inherited the same system after partition and the system remained unchanged and unchallenged. This Sardari system is one of the major causes of prevailing backwardness, underdevelopment and ethnocentrism of Baluchistan. The faith of the common people remained in the hands of Sardars, who have exploited and facilitated the exploitation of the different changing Sarkars (political and military governments) of the country. This helped in the imposition of discriminatory and exploitative policies of the government, regional and international factors. They marginalized the people and deprived the common people from fruits of sustainable development, education and prosperity. The only objective of the ruling elites was to perpetuate their authority at the cost of their own people. Although, the Sardari system was abolished by the System of Sardari (Abolition) Act, 1976. However, ironically, the Sardari system is also present in other parts of the country and the feudal system is exploiting their rights. However, in Baluchistan it is in the worst form.

6.4.4. The Foreign Intervention in Baluchistan Insurgency

The political instability in Baluchistan is due to the political segregation and violence, however, the mayhem in Baluchistan is augmented due to the foreign intervention. The major regional and international countries are involved in the disruption of peace in Baluchistan. The foreign involvement in Baluchistan is intensifying the situation and adding fuel to fire. The

regional countries are backing the separatist elements by financing, training, arming and providing them safe extractions. These foreign involvements are hindering the peace process in the province and halting national integration. This resulted in the suffering of the country so grievously since 2001 and during the past decade the nature of the strikes has also drastically changed. Their weapons, strategy and hybrid tactics are causing grave and strategic harm to the country. These terrorist elements mainly get aid from India and Afghanistan, however other regional and international countries are also there for operations.

6.4.4.1 India

India is in a state of conflict with each other on Kashmir and Line of Control (LoC) is one of the heavily armed conflict zones of the world. Kashmir is the central point of conflict between the two countries and has triggered hot pursuits by violating the ceasefire. This clash has never remained restricted to Kashmir rather India has exploited every occasion by activating the faultlines in other parts of Pakistan by backing ***Makti Bahini*** in East Pakistan during the 1970s, separatist elements in Baluchistan, Karachi and FATA. Indian intelligence agencies are patronizing terrorist organizations like BLA, TTP and Jamaatul Ahraar (JuA). The organizations were neutralized and flushed out from Pakistan and their terrorists' activities were considerably reduced during the period from 2015-2020, however, the increased Indian funding and backing has brought them back to the front. It has usurped the violence in the entire region for their strategic gains.

India is the major sponsor of terrorism in Baluchistan. In 2020, an amount of \$28,000 from Indian Bank of Punjab, while in the second instance a transaction of \$55,851 was made by Mr. Manmeet (an Indian national) from Indian Bank, New Delhi and was received at Afghanistan International Bank (Syed S. B., 2020). India has collectively spent \$820,000 to

TTP and \$60 million to sabotage CPEC. The primary objective of spending such a huge amount of funding in Pakistan is to stage an insurgency in Baluchistan. The geopolitical instability will sabotage CPEC which has exceptional geo-economics and geostrategic importance to both Pakistan and China. This huge funding has rapidly elevated a new wave of terrorism in the country. RAW has sponsored, funded and backed a group of terrorists who were involved in the terrorist activities in Karachi Stock Exchange, Chinese engineers and on law enforcement agencies in FATA and Baluchistan.

Indian funded Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP) and Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) to carry out the most of the bloodiest terrorist attacks. The Indian Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) is responsible for terrorist activities in Pakistan. They are providing diplomatic support from the Indian consulates in Afghanistan. Most of the post-incident inquiries has led the investigations to the fact that the India have been directly or indirectly involved in the attack or facilitated the attackers to carry out those attacks. The most recent terrorist attack targeting the 12th Rabiul Awal procession in Mastung claiming the lives of 55 people was carried out by Tehreek-e-Taliban (TTP), a banned terrorist organization funded by RAW. The interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti stated that this incident and before this – all major incidents that occurred in Baluchistan – and the RAW’s involvement has been there behind all those, and the forces that want to destabilize Pakistan” (Zehri, Guramani, & Shirazi, 2023).

India’s National Security Advisor (NSA) to PM Narendra Modi has outlined a hawkish military doctrine against Pakistan, “Defensive Offense” and introduced it during a speech in a conference in 2016. His strategy has brought a paradigm shift in India’s traditional defence strategy to a comparatively proactive stance. He adopted psychological pressure, surgical strikes, strategic deterrence, sponsoring separatist elements in the country and by funding

terrorism. Doval said, “Pakistan’s vulnerability is many times higher than (that of) of India (’s). Once they know India has shifted to defensive offense, they will find it is affordable for them. You can do one Mumbai you may lose Baluchistan,” (Neelakantan, 2016).

The Technical Support Division (TSD) is a covert wing operationally active under Indian Intelligence Agency, RAW which has allegedly been involved to infiltrate in the inner circles of Hafiz Saeed and carry out high profile operations against him. This was in response to 26/11 Mumbai attacks which were allegedly carried out by Lashkar-e-Taiba. The Indian Military Intelligence Chief Gen Rakesh Kumar Lomba sought permission of the then military Chief Gen V.K. Singh (Sarin, 2021). However, the group was disbanded immediately after the successful execution of eight operations abroad including Operation Seven Sisters.

In 2016, Kulbhushan Jadhav, a high ranked Indian Naval officer associated with Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) was arrested from Baluchistan. He has confessed to being involved in terrorism, espionage and sabotage and backing the BLA militants in Baluchistan. He confessed for his involvement of RAW in their alleged support to separatist elements Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), sectarianism, ethnic cleansing and volatility in Baluchistan, chaos and mayhem in Karachi (Ahmad, 2016).

The recent hostage crisis of Jaffar Express in Baluchistan has also shown India’s notorious role in the event. The BLA terrorists ambushed the Peshawar-bound train carrying 440 passengers. While alleging that India is the mastermind behind the terrorist activities carried out by BLA, DG (ISPR) Lt Gen Chaudhry stated, “We must understand that in this terrorist incident in Baluchistan, and other before, the main sponsor is your eastern neighbour (India)” (Hussain A. , 2025). During the entire event, Indian media has covered the narrative

of BLA and on aired the videos shared by the terrorist's sources and additionally they also shared old videos upgraded with AI tools for narrative building.

6.4.4.2 Afghanistan

Afghanistan is the second important supporter of terrorism and violence in Baluchistan due to its geographical proximity with the Baluchistan and FATA. Afghanistan has long been providing its territory to train, arm and strategize attacks on high value targets in Pakistan. The outlawed organizations like TTP, BLA and Tehreekul Ahraar have safe havens in Afghanistan and Indian embassy is providing sustenance to them. These radical organizations have been actively operating in Pakistan during the US occupation of Afghanistan and India enjoyed influence in the country. However, after the US withdrawal Taliban managed to control Kabul and formed their government that has continued TTP's influence in the country. TTP that is commonly known as Pakistani Taliban have imitated a new trajectory in Pakistan to terrorize the country and achieve their targets. The targets and path prescribed by India, regional and other international entities. Although Pakistan has managed to overcome the threat by breaking their networks after implementation of National Action Plan. The strong military operations have compelled them to retreat and relocate to Afghanistan. The rise of Taliban in Kabul has not only turned these organizations back to Pakistan with more sophisticated weapons, strategy, policy and organizational structure.

The deteriorating political situation in Afghanistan during the past two decades and rise of Taliban after a twenty years struggle has changed the political discourse from the previous time. Their changed political strategy has formed new inroads in their foreign policy towards Pakistan. They continued in retaining the terrorist sanctuaries in the country with Indian sponsorship. The Afghan support has intensified the terrorist attacks in Karachi, Lahore and

Peshawar. TTP and BLA instigate the young people of Baluchistan and tribal areas to get military training from Afghanistan and also spreading hatred against the state of Pakistan.

In 2021, the Indian ambassador to Afghanistan and Indian army general visited a Baloch militant training camp in Haji Gak in Afghanistan that housed more than 150 Baloch militants of BLA and paid \$30 million to establish a separate militant camp in Kandahar (Marwat, 2021). It has severally been confessed by high profile Indian military leadership that they are sponsoring the separatist elements in close collaboration with Afghanistan to carry out terrorist activities including bombing and target killing. During the night of 30th and 31st of December 2023, five hardcore militants were killed in an intelligence-based operation carried out in Avaran, Baluchistan, the intelligence reported that they were infiltrated from Afghanistan (Shirazi, 2023). Their primary objective was to carry out terrorist attempts on the law enforcement agencies and thwart peace in Baluchistan.

6.4.4.3 Gulf Countries

The strategic significance of Baluchistan and especially Gwadar is remarkably momentous. The port is located on the mouth of Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf through which one-third of the world's total oil passes. The region is strategically positioned at world's most imperative regions of the world that connects the Gulf, the Central and Southwest Asia. Besides all these benefits, the region is unable to flourish economically because it is located at the region's most vibrant faultlines. The tectonic plates of major powers collide and result in the strategically crumple up the entire region.

Dubai is one of the most strategically significant ports located on the southeastern side of the Persian Gulf. It is the largest, most populous and trade center of the United Arab

Emirates (UAE). The country does not have remarkable natural resources except some oil reserves and significantly, it has modernized its infrastructure to drive investment. It has installed the world's most advanced infrastructure and port, turned the country into a focal point of global trade, tourism and business. This distinct geostrategic advantage and modernized outlook in the traditional Middle East is the major cause of its booming economy. This is the reason why any other considerable development in their proximity is taken on serious note. The Director General Military Operations claimed that India has established nine military training camps across the Afghan border to train BLA and TTP insurgents. He further stated that UAE in collaboration with India is backing insurgency in Baluchistan by arming and funding the Baloch due to rapid working of CPEC (Imtiaz S. , 2010). The developments on Gwadar port are perceived as a grave threat to the economic interests of Dubai port.

Chabahar also enjoys tremendous significance due to its geostrategic positioning in the oil rich Persian Gulf region. The two rising powers of Asia are in the pursuit of developing their strategically important deep-water ports in the Persian Gulf for their increased presence in the region. Although the two countries deny the existence of any competition with each other, rather they aspire to increase the level of bilateral cooperation with each other for greater good. However, underneath an antagonism exists. Since 2003, India and Iran bilaterally started developing its Chabahar port to expand its trade opportunity in close collaboration with India. During the past few years, the Afghan government has also shown up their interests in inking a tripartite trade agreement to use Chabahar as an easier alternative route for their economic interests (Shah S. A., 2015). Modi's urgency to sign trade and economic agreements with Iran, UAE, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries is aimed to disrupt China Pakistan Economic

Corridor (CPEC). Although all the regional countries are under severe diplomatic pressure from the United States to avoid inking any trade or business agreement with Iran.

6.4.4.4 United States

The United States is having its longstanding strategic interests in the South Asia and the Middle East. The rapidly increasing China's strategic role in the South China Sea and Persian Gulf region has raised concerns for the United States. United States is backing India to contain China in South Asia and Japan, Taiwan, South Korea and ASEAN countries to impede China in South China Sea. On the other side, China has started influencing the entire region due to the extension of its economic strategy. CPEC has become China's symbol of economic ambition and China perceives the west a hostile camp towards this program. The Donald Trump administration has released a critical stance on the CPEC by stating that the CPEC passes through the disputed territory and there are certain areas where the United States should confront China (Akhtar, 2018). The United States tense stance on CPEC has directly affected Pakistan's diplomatic relations. The issue is more intensified especially when Washington is strategically in a close coloration with New Delhi for its strategy of containment of China in the region. This development provides India a strategic edge and advantage to freely stage insurgency in Baluchistan.

The United States and India are trying to maneuver Pakistan out of China's Belt and Road Initiative, an infrastructural plan in which China is financing heavily in more than 70 countries of the world including Pakistan (Alam, 2021). Pakistan has severely burnt its fingers in plans proposed by the Western powers. The west has secured its national interests at the cost of other countries. Pakistan was alone to suffer and pay the cost. It would be undoubtedly true to say that the United States is taking stock of economic and political consequences, as it has

planned to withdraw from the region. China is expanding its economic, trade and political influence, however, the increased Chinese economic engagement in either South China Sea, Indian Ocean or Persian Gulf can counter US influence in the region.

6.4.5 Major Terrorist Organizations Active in Baluchistan

The major cause of this underdevelopment and economic uncertainty is the US led war on terror in the region. Since, Pakistan willy-nilly became the frontline state and it has to play its role in the war being fought the next door. There had been a number of factors that brought this war into Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), because in early 1980s this part has played its role as a backyard of Afghan war. Secondly, due to foreign intervention by Afghanistan and India has also set fuel on fire. India established five consulates in Afghanistan near the Pakistan border and started backing TTP and other terrorist's organizations to attack Pakistani forces deployed in Tribal areas. It resulted in Pakistan's drawn-out conflict with Taliban in FATA. The conflict that was started from Waziristan and Bajaur Agency has slowly descended to Baluchistan and other parts of the country. The main source of money for these terrorist organizations is mainly extortion.

The key terrorist organizations active in Baluchistan region have played a vicious role with the help of foreign funding to stage noxious operations against law enforcement agencies, civilians, people from other ethnic groups like Hazaras. These organizations include:

6.4.5.1. Baluch Separatist Groups

There are a number of Baluch separatist groups and organizations active in Baluchistan fighting to establish Baluchistan, Pakistan's southwestern province, Iran's southeastern province of Sistan-Baluchistan and one province of Afghanistan as an independent country. These groups are motivated by different objectives, political agendas, methods and strategies

that they adopted to carry out their operations. These groups often claim the reason for their armed struggle is due to the marginalization policies of the federal government and establishment. In this connection, they sought to struggle for the independence of Baluchistan. The some of the notable Baluch separatist groups, their history, agendas, foreign connections and activity are briefly referred as under:

i. Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA)

Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) is a Baluchistan based terrorist organization, spanning primarily in the regions including Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan. The group advocates the separation and independence of Baluchistan as a separate country from Pakistan on ethnic basis. It was founded in 2000 and was preceded by Baluchistan Liberation Front (1964), it has its headquarters in Kandahar, Afghanistan (Shah, Mashal, & Rehman, 2018). BLA is fully funded by the Indian intelligence agency RAW for carrying out terrorist activities against the Pakistan army. Indian newspaper reported that the BLA Commanders had sought medical treatment in the Indian hospitals with disguise and fake identities (Bhattacharjee, 2019). BLA carried out several bloody attacks on the civilians and armed forces in the bordering areas of Afghanistan and in the cities as well. Aslam Alias Achu, the BLA Commander and mastermind responsible for the Chinese consulate attack was provided with medical treatment in Max Hospital in New Delhi (Saeed, 2018). Achu was wounded in an encounter with Pakistani forces and several BLA terrorists were gunned down in the operation. Indian consulates in Afghanistan have also added their share by training, hosting and providing financial support to the BLA terrorists in Afghanistan (Baabar, 2022). RAW has significant influence in Afghanistan's Ministry of Tribal Affairs and it influence the Afghan government to carry out its covert strategies in FATA and Baluchistan.

ii. Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF)

The Baluchistan Liberation Front (BLF) is a Baluchistan based terrorist organization that was founded in 1964 by Jummah Khan in Damascus, Syria. The organization is based on an ideology of Baloch nationalism and Marxism. The organization played a strategic role in the insurgency of Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran and during the period from 1973-1977 in Baluchistan, Pakistan. Iraq has also provided huge funding to this group to carry out terrorist activities during the Iran-Iraq war (1980-1988).

The group disappeared from the focus unless its reemergence in 2004 on the spotlight. Allah Nazer Baloch took the command of the group and started reactivating the terrorist operations mostly in Pakistan and Iran by targeting civilian and military personnel (Abid, 2013).

iii. Baluchistan Students Organization (BSO)

Baloch Students Organization (BSO) is an organization formed by the students of Balochistan province to struggle for the rights and interests of the Baloch students. In 1967, the organization was founded in Karachi and throughout it remained ethnically Baloch centric and gradually it became the largest Baloch student organization in the history of Pakistan. The primary aim of this organization was to raise voice for the rights of the unprivileged people of Baluchistan. The organization was later divided into two groups on ideological grounds; one group remained committed to continue to struggle under the parliamentary framework, whereas the other group became pro-independent. Dr. Allah Nazar Baloch, the founder of the pro-independence wing formed BSO-Azad that advocated the independence of Baluchistan to the pre-partition status of the colonial period. In 2013, the organization was declared as a

terrorist organization by the government of Pakistan due to its anti-state activities and separatist agendas.

iv. Baluch Nationalist Army

Baloch Nationalist Army is an umbrella group that was formed by a union of two groups, the Baloch Republican Army and United Baloch Army. This group was formed in January 2022 when the leaders of these organizations agreed upon the decision to carry out more deadly operations after the dissolution of their respective groups. BRA is ideologically based on ethno-nationalism, Baloch Nationalism and Separatism that fights for the independence of Baluchistan. Gulzar Imam Shambay is the commander and key militant of this group who surrendered along with 70 hardcore militants in Pakistan in April 2023 (Shah S. , 2023). After his arrest, Sarfraz Bangulzai led the command of this group and continued its militant operations across Pakistan (Latif, 2023). The groups are involved in the 2022 Lahore bombing in a busy market chowk in Anarkali that took the life of three people and injured more than 20 people (Gablo, 2022). It has also taken the responsibility of 2022 Panjugur and Naushki raids on Pakistani Frontier Corps in Baluchistan. On February 02, BNA attacked Frontier Corps base in Naushki and an outpost in Pangur with advanced weapons including US made M-16s, M4 Carbines, Bullet Proof Vests, Snipers and advanced pistols which are allegedly been obtained from abandoned US military (Aamir, 2022). The groups are operationally active in three regions including Pakistan's Baluchistan, Kandhar Afghanistan and Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran.

v. Lashkar-e-Baluchistan

LeB is also a Baluch separatist organization based in Baluchistan. This group is ideologically nationalist, Marxists and claims to be secularist. The group is involved in

bombing and terrorist activities in Lahore, Quetta and Karachi. In 2022, they claimed responsibility for a terrorist attack in front of the Chinese Consulate in Karachi (Hussain, 2012). The group was involved in many terrorist activities and target killing however, now its operationally inactive.

6.4.5.2 Sectarian Organizations

Beside the radical activities of ethnically motivated terrorist organizations in Baluchistan, there have been a number of instances when organizations carried out terrorist activities, target killings, bombings and suicide attacks on sectarian grounds. The region is perpetrated and victim of religiously motivated banned outfits to carry out terrorist activities against other sectarian groups. Baluchistan is among the most volatile landscapes in terms of sectarian scuffles. The geostrategic location of this region is the primary cause of these volatilities. India is at the top of those foreign sponsors who are allegedly activating this Faultline in close collaboration with Afghanistan and funding those banned outfits to stage insurgency in the country and sabotage development projects in the region. The few important sectarian organizations actively participating terrorist activities in Baluchistan are as under:

i. Jundullah

Jundullah is an Iran based terrorist organization that also has presence in Baluchistan. Jundullah means “soldiers of God”, the organization is also famous with its name as Jonbesh-i-Moqavemat-i-Mardom-i-Iran or “People’s Resistance Movement of Iran (PMRI)”. The organization is ideologically based on Baloch nationalism, Sunni Salafi, anti-Shia and Salafi Jihadism. The estimated size of this organization counts around 700 to 2000 hardcore militants who are involved in carrying out terrorism in both countries (Shahzad, 2010). The Jundullah commander Abdul Malik Rigi was arrested in February 2010 while travelling from United

Arab Emirates to Kyrgyzstan (Worth, 2010). He was judicially trailed and sentenced by the Tehran revolutionary tribunal and later on executed in June 2010 at Evin Prison. The organization was created in 2003 as a proxy to fight the Iranian military and later it started operating in Pakistan province of Baluchistan. The organization is closely connected with Pakistani based ethnic and sectarian organizations, however it mainly remained operationally active in the Sistan-Baluchistan province. The Iraqi government during the Saddam era has backed Mujahideen-e-Khalq to activate the ethnic Faultline against Iran and funded Jundullah to create sectarian strikes in the country (Merat, 2018). In the beginning, they fought for the Iranian Revolution and later then for Saddam Hussain and this political standpoint has made them their most favourite organization in the eyes of the Trump administration and White House. The organization has targeted a number of high-profile military and civilian personality during their attacks. It took the responsibility of a series of bombings in Zahedan during 2007-10, 2009 Pishin bombing. In July 2010, a suicide bombing in Iranian strategic port Chahbahar killing 38 people. After the execution of Abdul Malik Rigi, Muhammad Dhahir Baloch became the new commander of this organization and is the main suspect of 2010 bombings.

ii. Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan

Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan is a banned terrorist outfit in Pakistan that is involved in violent activities across the country, especially active in FATA and Baluchistan. The ideological motives of TTP are based on Islamic fundamentalism, Sectarianism, Separatism and enthused from the Salafi school of thought. The headquarters and main training camps are mostly based in eastern Afghanistan. In 2014 US department of defence revealed the estimated size in numbers that counts around 25000 (Khattak D. , 2021), whereas Pakistan has estimated its number between 7000 to 10000 (Haq, 2022). The organization is trained, funded and backed

by Afghanistan and India to carry out their national interests inside Pakistan, moreover it is also associated with other terrorist organizations including BLA, Al-Qaeda, Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi and Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan. Baitullah Mehsud was one of the founder and leading members of TTP from 2007 to 2009, later it was commanded by Hakimullah Mehsud (2009-13), Fazal Hayat (2013-2018) and since 2018, Noor Wali Mehsud is commanding this group (Boone, 2014). This group is involved in a number of terrorist activities in Pakistan including the beheading of three Sikhs in 2010, attack on Malala Yusufzai, Lahore Church bombing, 2016 Lahore bombing on Christians celebrating Easter and INS Mehran Base attack in Karachi. The organization is connected with the separatist elements in Baluchistan and carrying out insurgency operations in Baluchistan.

iii. Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Alami

The Lashkar-e-Jhangvi Alami is another notable terrorist organization actively responsible for insurgency in Baluchistan. It is an offshoot of Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) which was formed in the 1980s to carry out Shia killing in Pakistan. It is a banned terrorist group responsible for carrying out sectarian terrorism in the country and associated with TTP, BLA, Jundullah and Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan. The organization has its sanctuaries and training camps in southern Afghanistan (Sarwar, 2017). It is ideologically based on Takfirism and anti-Shiism. The organization was founded by Riaz Basra, Malik Ishaq, Akram Lahori and Ghulam Rasool Shah for the extermination of Shiism from Pakistan. The organization has been involved in a series of deadly terrorist attacks on civilians, sacred places, security forces, and military installations and is involved in publishing content to spread hatred and violence. LeJ's notable terrorist attacks include the 2009 attack on Sri Lankan national cricket team, 2011 Afghanistan Ashura bombing, 2016 Quetta police training college attack and it claimed

responsibility of hundreds of target killings and terror attacks law enforcement agencies across the country. The organization is ambitiously aimed to transform Pakistan into a Sunni caliphate, an ideology similar to ISIS. This common objective led to the formation of an alliance with ISIS and in 2017, the two organizations jointly took the responsibility of the terror attacks carried out in Pakistan (Zahid, 2017). This new development has taken place in the leadership of Yusuf Mansoor Khorasani, a militant leader who is associated with a number of Pakistan and Afghanistan based terrorist organizations

iv. Jaish ul-Adl

Jaish ul-Adl is a Baluchistan based terrorist organization ideologically based on Baloch Nationalism, Separatism, anti-Pakistan and anti-Iranianism sentiments. The organization was founded by Salahuddin Farooqui and later led by Amir Naroui and Hashem Nokri (Dorson, 2021). The organization is operationally active in Southeastern province of Iran and some parts of Pakistan Baluchistan, a substantially concentrated region of Baloch people. The group started carrying out its activities after the execution of Abdul Malik Rigi and other key terrorist leaders of Jundullah by Iran. The execution of top leaders of Jundullah made the group operationally vulnerable, hindering its abilities to continue the activities. Additionally, this group emerged and members of Jundullah groups joined Jaish ul-Adl because their leaders were executed. It carried out its first terrorist attack inside Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province during October 2013 and killed 14 Iranian border guards (Esfandiari, 2013). The organization has its association with BLA, Kurdish Separatist groups of Iran, Al-Qaeda and with other regional terrorist organizations funded and sponsored by foreign hands.

v. Islamic State – Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)

The Islamic State – Khorasan Province (ISIS-K) is an offshoot of ISIS that has terrorized the entire Middle East in the past decade. The organization is established to expand the agenda of ISIS and establish a government in the Khorasan region based on the Caliphate. This group is ideologically based on Islamic fundamentalism, Salafism and separatism. The group emerged from 2012, when Hafiz Saeed Khan aspired to follow the footsteps of Abu Bakar Al-Baghdadi and started Jihadism in this region. It started connecting its militants to Al-Nusra front, Afghan Taliban and other local militant groups active in FATA and Baluchistan. IS allied with Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan, Jundullah, banned Islamic Renaissance party of Tajikistan and later Lashkar-e-Jhangvi al-Alami also associated with them. On one side, they have been working to establish an Islamist regime by fighting a proxy war in the region and on the other hand, they have been recruiting militants for the reinforcements to ISIS in Syria. Consequently, from 2012 to 2014, in collaboration with TTP they managed to send around 1000 volunteers to fight with ISIS and paid them US \$800 monthly (Giustozzi, 2018). The emergence of Islamic State in the region has changed the strategic discourse of the region because they started to establish a strong foothold. In 2015, almost three major Taliban groups merged into Islamic State including Pakistani Taliban (TTP), Afghan Taliban (Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan) and Haqqani Network and pronounced Hafiz Saeed Khan as their ‘Wali’ and ‘Amir’ (Firdous, 2023).

vi. Ansar ul Furqan

Ansar al-Furqan is a banned terrorist organization ideologically based on Salafi Jihadism, Baluch nationalism and separatism. This group is operationally active in Sistan-Baluchistan and Khuzestan province of Iran. Hashem Azizi (2013-2015) is the founding leader

and after his killing in action, the group was led by Jalil Qanbarzehi (2015-2017). They are strategically allied with other regional terrorist organizations including Jaish-Muhammad of Iraq, Al-Nusra of Syria, Islamic State in Afghanistan, Jaish al-Adl of Iran and Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan. The close connections with other banned organizations of other regions provides them maneuverability and operational ease.

Although, the terrorist organizations like Ansar al-Furqan and Jaish ul-Adl are not directly carrying out terrorist activities in Pakistan. They are operationally confined to their terror acts in the Sistan-Baluchistan province of Iran, however, due to their alliance with Pakistan based terrorist groups. They have submerged themselves with other regional organizations to increase the spectrum of their influence for instance with Lashkar-e-Jhanvi al-Alami is not directly involved in Iran, however, their alliance with TTP, Islamic State, Jundullah and Jaish ul-Adl has expanded its operational range from Pakistan to Afghanistan and Iran. Consequently, Due to the volatile situation in Baluchistan the local people are compelled to migrate to other places for their families from war. The trade and business are affected, schools are closed, hospitals cannot provide proper medical facilities and the living environment is desperately affected by the volatile situation of the province. The local Baloch are migrating from Turbat, Panjgur, Gwadar, Awaran, Khuzdar and Kharan districts (Baloch, 2014).

6.5 Chaos and Mayhem in Karachi: Financial Hub

Karachi, Pakistan's largest city, financial hub and economic backbone of the country faces a number of challenges and chaos, volatility and mayhem is one of the top trials which it faces today. The complex dynamics of the city, heterogeneous socio-political and ethnic

environment and administrative maladministration has major reasons for hindrance in maintaining the state's jurisdiction.

6.5.1. Geo-Economic Importance of Karachi

Karachi, a fishing village of the eighteenth century has grown into a magnificent economic hub of the twenty-first century. Today, it has not only become the biggest city of Pakistan and the backbone of its economy. The city is exceptionally significant due to Bin Qasim port and an important trade point with the world. Most of the trade with the Gulf countries and with the rest of the world flows through Karachi. The city is an economic backbone of the country and often referred to as the 'Glory of East', 'City of Lights' and the 'Liverpool of India and Pakistan' (Kazmi, Mehdi, & Arsalan, 2013). It is true to say that if Karachi observes heavy downpour, sinks in flood, falls victim of terrorism or suffers political upheaval, the entire country will bleed economically. This big city is home to 20 million people, heavy industrial sector, huge trade, big economy and gigantic infrastructural and industrial installation. Moreover, the city regulates the country's huge maritime security, trade and transport; it also has offices of almost all major business enterprises. The city has main offices of major airlines including Emirate, Qatar, Etihad, Turkish, British and Philips Air Line. The city also hosts the offices of major mobile companies; moreover, it also includes plants and service stations of major automobile manufacturing companies. It is true to call Karachi as a 'Jewel in the Crown' more than just an economic hub (Ahmar D., 2019).

6.5.2. Karachi; a Multiethnic and Multicultural City

The provincial capital of Sindh is the largest city of Pakistan and is one of the most important cities of the country with respect to ethnic and cultural diversity. The city is the only city of the country where almost all the ethnic and cultural representation of the country can

be observed. The current practice from the past three decades reveals that the population from one ethnic origin remains in their particular majority area and intermingles with other ethnic groups in limited neutral arenas including public places. These areas include public and private academic institutions, factories, offices, hospitals and recreational places. Karachi is demographically a different provincial capital as compared to Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar and Gilgit because in other provincial capitals Punjabis, Baloch, Pakhtuns and Gilgiti are in majority. Karachi is the provincial capital of Sindh and the Sindhi-speaking population constitutes only 10 percent of the total population. It means the rural Sindh's representation can only form a tiny portion of the city's population.

Culture is a comprehensive and vast concept of sociology that includes our “way of being and thinking”, including tangible and intangible features including ethnic background, language, ethnic origin, race and even cuisine. This act of including or engaging people from different socio-cultural backgrounds is pronounced as cultural diversity. Cultural diversity is a positive sign for the development of a balanced society in a city. This helps in development and expansion of knowledge and values. It also promotes the environment of mutual coexistence among the people from different cultural and ideological origins.

The people from clustered ethnicities, Muslim sects, sub-sects and ‘minority’ religions reside in their own areas of majority and they only venture out of these areas when they have to trade, work or play in the city have more neutral economic and cultural spaces (Paracha, 2014). The past three decades have brought radical changes in the socio-political environment of the city. The sectarian, ethnic and sub-ethnic conflicts in the city has destroyed the harmony and social accord of the city. However, due to the presence of state machinery in those public places, institutions and organizations result in comparatively less security issues. Those places

also generate revenue and economy due to the trade and activity of the people in those areas. While the Urdu-Speaking population of the city which forms the majority of the city is roughly now 45% of the city's demography, Pakhtun forms the second largest population (25%), Punjabis (10%) and Sindhis (10%) and the rest 10% are composed of Baloch, Kashmiris and settlers from the northern areas of Pakistan and immigrants from Bangladesh, Myanmar and other countries (Ahmar D. M., 2020).

6.5.3 Drivers of Violence, Carnage and Mayhem

The socio-political environment in Karachi has been changed since early 90s and the post 9/11 era has increased the security dilemma for Pakistan. Although the entire country has suffered from the new wave of terrorism, however, Karachi remained at the top of violent incidents. Pakistan is one of the worst victims of bomb and terrorist attacks especially from the period from 2008 to 2018 remained the highest number of terrorist activities reported in the newspaper. Since Pakistan served as frontline state in the US led war on terror in the region, therefore, Karachi was the city which alone has suffered the most. In 2012, as per the statistical data, the terrorism reported death were around 1,553, followed by Baluchistan at 957, KPK at 656 and Punjab at 104 (Khan I. , 2023). This death record escalated to new record of 2,700 in 2013. This target killing was not confined to one type or activity rather it was result of suicide attacks, bombing, targeted killing, political and other type of assassinations to challenge the writ of the state. It was aimed to create a mayhem in the country. Initially the attacks were started on the law enforcement agencies including security forces, their installations and strategic positions. Afterwards, the targets were changed to political and religious personalities. The religious scholars, lawyers, doctors, professors and other renowned and public figures from different professional backgrounds were targeted on sectarian grounds.

The drivers of these kill squads were different some incidents were carried out by political parties, some by Jihadists elements, the criminal gangs and mafias, some were based on ethnic or by sectarian terrorists. The attack on Karachi airport in 2014 has drastically changed the general discourse of terrorist activities in Pakistan. In this terrorist attack, ten Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan militants stormed Jinnah International Airport, Karachi and attempted to hijack a plane. The primary aim of this attack was to sabotage the government's ongoing peace talks with the local Taliban. TTP claimed the responsibility. The attack shown a tactical shift in Taliban's attack and terrorist activities within Pakistan (Hassan, 2014).

Karachi is one of the fast and rapidly growing cities of the world. In early 1940's, its population was around 435,000 and now it has crossed 25 million. This rapid and uncontrolled growth has gradually changed the demography, cultural and ethnic equation of the city. Once it was the Sindhi majority city and now only 15% of its inhabitants are Sindhi speaking. The population of the city is increasing by 5% annually. These rapid changes are not affecting its demography but they are also affecting the sustainable economic development, urbanization process, good governance and resulting in instability and violence.

Due to its huge textile sector, industries and other businesses, it manages to generate more than 60% of Pakistan's total revenue and 90% of provincial revenue of Sindh (Tariq, 2015). Karachi is the backbone of Pakistan's economy since it handles 95% of Pakistan's foreign trade and almost all the major banks, mobile companies and automobiles have their head offices in the city. Karachi Stock Exchange is ranked fifth among twenty-eight other stock exchanges of the world (Al-Nahyan, 2016).

There are certain reasons why people indulge in the acts of terrorism. There are some motivations which fascinate people to carry out such acts of terrorism. The basic enthusiasm which stimulates a normal person to step in this realm are mainly psychological, ideological and strategic perspective. Firstly, in the psychological perspective a person indulges in the act of terrorism purely of his own choice and it is result of his own basic state of mind. In fact, it is result of an extreme hatred and abhorrence against an individual or a group of people that's why a person aims to kill an individual or a group of people. Secondly, a person engages in the violent act of terrorism on certain ideological grounds, the ideology may include and encompass both political and religious ideology. The groups wage terrorist activities and carry out attacks to achieve certain political and ideological objectives. They are result of their political and ideological hatred which they feel against the other group. The Irish Republican Army (IRA) in United Kingdom, Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elem (LTTE), Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda are the examples of that. Third is the strategic perspective of terrorism, when a small group or a fraction of people who cannot receive the attention of the stronger opponent or state. It carries out terrorist activities and resort violence to create plight. It is a rationalized strategy adopted by a conventionally weak enemy to gain victory after the failure of political settlement. Sometimes other states fund and sponsor terrorism in other states to achieve their strategic objectives. In 1988, Libya backed terrorists to detonate a bomb in an international flight Pan am 103 moving from London to New York in response to alleged bombing by US and British forces.

When we observe the wave of terrorism during the past decade, in addition to these perspectives, a number of other factors are also observed which provoke to the terrorist activities in Karachi. The economic deprivation, excessive state intervention, nationalist

politicians and ethnically-oriented political parties. The negative aspect of political struggle and illegal distribution of wealth or economic opportunities has played a drastic impact on the social cohesion of the city.

The ethnically biased political parties have indulged in the excessive use of violence and extremism in Karachi. They are an imperative source of activism and even to a level of viciousness. The period from 2002 to 2013 has witnessed a wave of political violence and it reached to its height in the after 2007. The political rivalries and contentions resulted in the death of more than 7000 people (Malik & Siddiqui, 2019). These law-and-order situation has challenged the overall situation of the city, peace and stability. The government requires to ensure the implementation of government's writ, carrying out crackdowns, judicial trial, and execution of terrorists and promoting reconciliation in all the fractions of the society.

6.5.4. Political Parties, Criminal Groups and Illegal Economies

Since the 1980s, a strategic use of violence in the political culture of Pakistan and its vibes are more visible in Karachi than anywhere else in Pakistan. The martial law regime of General Zia ul Haq has introduced a new policy of strategically using the violence by creating ethnically-based political parties to secure popular vote and also legitimize the political decision making. It promoted the ethnically oriented political parties and raised ethnically motivated political leaders among the people. Zia backed Mahajir Qomi Movement which was later called as Mujtahida Qomi Movement (MQM) to counter Pakistan People's Party in Urban areas of Sindh. During the late 2000s and from 2002 to 2013 the politically opponents associated with different political parties in Karachi became violently active to counter each other. The violent activity took the life of more than 7000 people. The conflict in Karachi did not remain confined between Muhajir and Sindhis rather at different occasions it turned into a

conflict between Muhajir and Pakhtuns and sometimes between Muhajir and Baloch. These illicit deadly conflicts not only resulted in a huge economic damage, political instability but also harm the lives of innocent people. It is also observed that in Karachi there are a number of political parties that have their armed wings which become operational at the time of their need. Moreover, in Karachi almost all the political parties influence to get their influence in the governmental machinery by inducting people on the basis of favoritism. However, it is predicted that by 2025 the Pakhtuns will outnumber the Muhajir in Karachi (Report 255, 2014).

Karachi as being a megacity and an important hub of huge economic opportunities is home of a huge unemployed youth. There is a huge number of Pakistani and Afghan residents deprived of economic opportunities. This is the major cause of a high crime rate, human trafficking, smuggling and other criminal activities in Karachi. The city has become a hub of organized crime and other illicit activities. The government's privatization policy, economic debt and high taxations policy due to its conditional loans from international organizations has further crippled the economy. The privatization has resulted in downsizing and unemployed many people from their jobs. Due to these problems a valuable job opportunity has become the most contested thing for common people. The criminalization has further been linked with political parties and sometimes funded by foreign hands has become a nightmare.

6.5.5. Jihadist Militancy and Sectarian Violence

Militancy and sectarian violence are another frightening chapter which has been haunting Karachi since the Zia era. Since 1980, militants are raised and armed for political ends, although it was initially for the containment of communism in Afghanistan, however, the militancy and Kalashnikov culture has affected the internal security situation of Pakistan. The local Jihadi organizations and sectarian terrorists Groups. In the past decades, these groups

have had some strategic support from the military establishment due to Pakistan's Afghan and Kashmir policy. They are occasionally used to confront India or other enemies to secure Pakistan's strategic objectives. These active Jihadi organizations include Lashkar-e-Tayaba, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and Sipah-e-Sahaba. These organizations have been created during the Zia regime in the pursuit of his Islamization policies and also to establish a strong military strength internally and regionally. The Islamic Revolution in Iran has unleashed a strategic rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia which affected Pakistan as well. Both countries backed militias to get strategic ends in Pakistan. Therefore, Karachi has become an important theatre of this proxy war between the two regional countries.

The post 9/11 has raised a new era of this Jihadi terrorism in Pakistan especially in Karachi. TTP started operating in Karachi to take revenge of the Pakistan army's operation in the Tribal areas by attacking the strategic installations in Karachi and by targeting prominent personalities. On October 18, 2007, Karsaz bombing occurred which resulted in at least 187 deaths and more than 500 injured (Sahoutara, 2022). A huge mob was gathered to receive Benazir Bhutto, the ex-Prime Minister of Pakistan who came back to Pakistan after an eight-year-long self-imposed exile. Besides that, TTP also focused on targeting the anti-Taliban liberal Pashtun party, the Awami National Party (ANP). The swift increase in the ferocious and vehement terrorist operations has compelled ANP to close its 70 percent political offices in Karachi and limit its political gatherings as political practice. The MQM terrorist Ajmal Pahari confessed after its arrest that India is running four militant camps for training and arming the Altaf-led Group in Deradhun, Haryana, in North and North-East India (Syed S. B., 2020). He confessed that 40 terrorists of his group have received hardcore training from those camps.

Conclusion

The Indian Ocean Region is a backwater for a number of major powers of this region and global rivalry of world powers. It has driven the attention of the globe as during the Cold War era the focus was confined to the Atlantic and Pacific Ocean where the USA and Soviet Union fought a silent but punitive war. The submarines, ships and fighter jets fought a longstanding war and proxy armies kept on engaging each other. Afghanistan, Middle East and South China Sea witnessed the extreme episode of super power rivalry which ended up after several hot theatres of war. The proxy militias played like cats and dogs. The same type of strategic adventurism in the South Asia and Indian Ocean Region tends to rise in the post 2001 era. This region has long been suffering a different pace of turbulence and uproar. The Indian Ocean Region has gained new prominence in the strategic affairs of the region.

China's two ocean strategy is the major reason for the recent change in the pace of strategic rivalry in the Indian Ocean Region. The reason for China's tilt towards the Ocean is due to the fact that the world's more than 50 percent oil is transported through the IOR and China's 90 percent trade with the world is carried out through the Ocean. China's dependency on the ocean has increased its concern for securing the seas. In 2012, the 18th Congress of the Communist party of China (CPC) adopted a strategy of modernizing and building a strong naval force to control the seas waves.

China's strategy towards the Indian Ocean consists of three elements. The first is its expansive Belt and Road Initiative which is based on economic interests. Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Maldives and Iran are among those countries which have directly benefitted from Chinese foreign Support. The second is to get access to the ports of the littoral countries and provide them financial and military assistance for the development of their ports. The Chinese

assistance is given to the very next neighbour i.e., Bangladesh to the far ports located at the horns of Africa. The engagement with these countries enables ever expanding trade routes of China. The third element is based on the naval modernization program by commissioning new advanced aircraft carriers, vessels, missile, weaponry and electronic warfare systems. It aimed to embark on the acquisition of state-of-the-art equipment and naval strategies.

In response to China's expansionist designs, India has also borrowed to some strategies and adopted certain counter measures to maximize its power in the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. In the political and strategic context India is increasing its diplomatic relations with the United States and its allies. Moreover, it has started connecting its ports with other littoral countries of IOR. As soon as Prime Minister Narendra Modi assumed office, he gave special focus to its maritime strategy and therefore adopted Project SAGAR and Project Mosam. The fundamental principle of these projects was based on the principle of "Neighbourhood First". Therefore, it has replicated the Chinese strategy of investing in developing the ports of other regional countries.

Secondly, India started pursuing the status of "Net Security Provider" in the Indian Ocean Region. India's aspirations are reflected in the Maritime Strategy documents and the statements of PM Narendra Modi and other political elites. In the pursuit of achieving this strategic outreach, India has invested heavily on its naval modernization. It has not only distended its navy but it has also increased the superiority of its naval gear by importing and indigenously built equipment in collaboration of foreign partners.

India has long been mainly focused on the territorial threats coming from the foreign interventions, in the pursuit of maximizing its defence capabilities it has transformed the entire

strategic outlook of its military and air force during the past two decades. Later, in response to China's flexing of naval muscle in the Indian Ocean Region India tended to modernize its naval capabilities. The main objective of India's naval modernization was to defend its maritime interests, however in the broader context India also wants to maximize its naval strategy and pursued the offensive realist approach in extending its naval interests in the IOR. India has changed its traditional focus of territorial threats to maritime domain awareness. India is changing its strategic positioning in the IOR by virtue of its naval capabilities. It increases its strategic and diplomatic influence in the region.

India has also increased the influence of its maritime and island diplomacy by starting new initiatives including SAGAR and MOSAM. Through SAGAR India has started engaging with the littoral countries and connected for assistance, medical and support missions. Whereas, MOSAM initiative connects the littoral countries to engage in trade and business with the traditional countries who previously had been connected in regional trade for centuries. These projects also enhance regional security from terrorism, piracy, smuggling and human trafficking.

India has tangibly increased its maritime strategy by developing and quantifying naval assets. India has identified several goals, defence strategies, trade and objectives for the maritime interests. India has increased the superiority of its naval assets, vessels, aviation, stealth technology and advanced weaponry system to dominate the IOR. The advanced weapons, equipment, services and assistance are mainly provided by the USA, Russia, NATO, France and Australia. India is also engaged in increasing the professional capabilities of its naval force for combating terrorism, piracy, human smuggling and dealing with warlike situations.

The tensions are growing owing to India's rapid modernization of its naval force. India's national interests are growing in the Indian Ocean Region and as their interests are growing, they are paving their way towards conflict and new struggle for dominance. The situation is inducing concerns and anxiety among other littoral countries especially Pakistan. This is due to the reason that the naval modernization of India has direct implications on Pakistan. Although India wants to attain the status of net security provider in the IOR and they are required to counter increasing Chinese influence in the region. India is ambitious and committed to attain the status of *atmanirbharta* ("Self-Reliance"). India is diversifying its naval engagement in the region and connecting itself with other littoral countries to cope with security and humanitarian challenges.

Pakistan is the country where almost all the Chinese interest converges and it further increases and it raises Indian concerns about Pakistan. Although India proclaims that their naval operations and activities are only aimed to ensure their security, it directly influences the security situation in Pakistan. Indian naval modernization is a paradigm shift for Pakistan which already has a number of unresolved territorial conflicts. Moreover, India has developed a number of Pakistan centric war doctrines and employed a number of covert strategies to engage Pakistan in a hybrid war.

India has activated sectarian, ethnic and sub-ethnic fault-lines in Pakistan by financing extremist elements. India is sponsoring terrorism and creating mayhem in Baluchistan and in Karachi, the financial hub of the country. India has established several secret cells in the country and in Afghanistan as well to stage insurgency in Baluchistan. The terrorist organizations including BLA, TTP, LeJ, some NGOs, and media groups are financed to act adversely against the national interest of Pakistan and also to build an anti-state narrative

among the youth. The pseudo-intellectuals and certain people are engaged in disseminating propaganda against the state, institutions, the army and Intelligence agencies. These activities are part of India's grand strategy of hybrid warfare and Ajit Doval's strategy of Offensive-defense strategy. Besides the non-state actors and terrorism, the propaganda against the institutions is also spread among the youth in an organized and deliberate manner. The propaganda is spread on the basis of bashing the army and intelligence agencies.

➤ Findings and Discussions

The study is mainly focused on four research questions.

The first question is based on what is the rationale of India's Maritime Strategic Thinking? The Second question is concentrated on how the Indian Navy is posing traditional security challenges to Pakistan's Maritime interests? and the third questions based on what are the nontraditional security challenges to Pakistan vis-à-vis India? The study remained focused and the literature was reviewed carefully to find the best possible results. The study was conducted in different perspectives and resulted in concluding the following findings which can be helpful in furthering the maritime strategy for Pakistan.

i. Impact of "Sea-Power" and "Offensive Realism" on the Maritime Strategic Thinking of India

The first finding is related to the theoretical and philosophical basis of India's maritime strategy. India has adopted the new maritime strategy on a certain theoretical and ideological basis. In fact, the theory of Sea-Power expounded by Alfred Thayer Mahan proposes that the "one who controls the waves controls the world". In this context the country which will have stronger naval capabilities and armed gear will be more in a position to influence the region. The United States has previously adopted the same policy and has been currently controlling world politics for the last one century. The same was the case with Britain which focused on strengthening the naval capabilities and dominated the age of imperialism. The United States has captured the strategic 'choke-points' which influenced the political affairs. Now, in the same context India has adopted the theory of Sea-Power to dominate the Indian Ocean Region and beyond. India has started the project of rapid modernization of its naval force. Moreover, in the pursuit of maximizing its capabilities it has changed the entire force structure and weapon competences.

Secondly, the theory of Offensive Realism of Prof. John Mearsheimer is another theoretical corner stone for the doctrinal transformation in Indian Maritime strategy. The theory states that the states tend to accumulate power by any means to become hegemon and influence others. In this connection, the manifestation of military power and capability is an essential factor in the projection of power abroad. The rapid modernization in the navy is truly a practical manifestation of this concept. The theory is practically different from Kenneth Waltz's theory of balance of power and defensive realism. The employment of an offensive realist approach coincided with the presence of RSS in the power corridors. It has changed the entire strategic discourse of the South Asian region.

ii. The Doctrinal Transformation since 2001

The perilous bilateral relations and longstanding conflicts between the two nuclear power states have always kept this patch of the world into the global attention. The attack on the Indian parliament led to the development of Cold Start Doctrine (CSD), a quick maneuvering limited war strategy which was aimed to engage with sub-conventional tactics. However, this doctrine was later countered by the development of nuclear tipped low yield nuclear weapons by Pakistan. It ensured that any type of Indian aggression shall be countered swiftly with low limited nuclear strikes. The doctrine later followed by Air power doctrine, TSD and Offensive-defence strategy under hybrid war doctrine and now the naval doctrine or modernization of naval capacities. In fact, the post 2001 era is the rapidly evolving phase of doctrinal transformation by India and changed the entire strategic discourse of South Asia. Although India has modernized its military strategies during this period of time, it is also worth mentioning that Pakistan has successfully developed a comprehensive counter strategy to

safeguard its sovereignty from its external intervention. However, the naval modernization is the only sector Pakistan still has to go through.

iii. The Indian Naval Modernization and its Impact on Pakistan

The Indian strategic outlook and its massive naval modernization has rapidly changed the entire strategic discourse of the South Asian and especially the Indian Ocean Region. Pakistan has developed tactical nuclear weapons to counter increasing Indian threats projected from its military doctrines. However, the recent naval modernization and offensive strategy has again changed the strategic balance against the interest of Pakistan. India increasing defence budget, conventional capabilities, procurement of arms and equipment and militarization of blue waters. The instant developments are posing strategic implications on Pakistan, its economy and above all the comprehensive security situation. India's modernization and its strategic engagement is essentially aimed to increase the international and regional vulnerabilities of Pakistan. The strategic lobbying with Afghanistan and Gulf countries coincided with fast-track transfer of technology from the west has led Pakistan into horns of dilemma. Moreover, India is swiftly engaging with the internal anti-state segments of the country.

iv. Regular Naval Exercises since 2010

The study unveiled a number of naval exercises continuing on a yearly basis within itself and also with other allied countries for the operationalization of its force capabilities. The primary purpose of these naval exercises is to increase the synergy and cooperation among other wings of armed forces. The change in the naval strategy and force gear can also be reflected from those naval exercises. The naval exercises tended to be offensive. The navy is equipped with lethal and offensive weapons, arms and ammunition for swift maneuvering and fulfills India's dream of becoming net security provider in the IOR and beyond. In fact, the

naval exercises are also aimed to operationally practice new war concepts, provide in hand practice and master the arts of wars.

v. Possibility of Limited Naval Conflict in IOR

The literature reviewed during the study and the interviews conducted from the naval officers, researchers, and different think tanks reflects that there is a possibility of limited conflict and standoff in the Indian Ocean Region. The rapidly modernizing navy, increased patrolling and India's flexing of muscle in the IOR will not remain confined to security; rather India's previous track history reflects that they would pursue strategic adventurism in the IOR for shallow maneuvering. However, the same would not be treated as a limited surgical strike rather Pakistan would pursue a full-fledged response that could escalate further. The balance of terror and conventional deterrence can only guarantee avoiding misadventures from India. Pakistan does not have parity with respect to its conventional capabilities, it can only achieve parity and attain deterrence with the help of its nuclear deterrence.

vi. Nuclearization of IOR: Trends and Trajectories

The study also entails the nuclearization aspect of the Indian Ocean Region. The emanating threats to the peace in the Indian Ocean Region are caused by its nuclearization. India has started nuclearization of IOR by deploying nuclear submarines, vessels equipped with nuclear tipped ballistic and cruise missiles, the K-4 Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs) are examples of that and aircraft carriers heavily armed with nuclear tipped missiles. The rapid nuclearization is changing the strategic balance of power in the IOR and beyond. The IOR is economically an important corridor for global trade and it has strategically important choke points which cannot be ignored by the world powers. The rapid nuclearization will not remain unchecked by the major powers of the world and the littoral countries which shall be affected by it at the later stage.

vii. Second Strike Capability and Deterrence Stability

The second-strike capability is an important phenomenon in the strategy of nuclear deterrence. The main objective of every nuclear weapon state is to attain second strike capability in case the war reaches the nuclear ladder. The submarine based second strike capability is believed as the most reliable and survivable capability. This is due to the reason that the modern submarines are equipped with stealth technology and they are not detectable with the traditional radar systems. Moreover, they have longer endurance in sea missions due to nuclear reactors and power generation with them. This quality gives them longer endurance, enhanced strategic capabilities to engage in war-like situations. Most of the nuclear states have attained sea based second strike capabilities. In this connection, the Submarine Based Ballistic Missile (SLBMs) gives ensured and punitive second-strike capability. This study finds that the primary objective of nuclearization of IOR by Indian Navy is to attain the credible second-strike capability.

viii. Space assets / Spy Satellites or Naval purposes

The study further finds that India's measures for maritime domain awareness are not only confined to the defence purposes and threat China. India has launched its indigenously built satellite for its communication and surveillance. The satellite is aimed to provide network capabilities without any foreign dependency. It helps in managing maritime traffic, intelligence gathering and other likely exercises. The indigenous satellite gives India self-sufficiency and also secrecy of its information.

Pakistan should also increase the number of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) for surveillance, advanced radar system and other assets to keep the IOR checked from any misadventure by India. The available equipment only provides Pakistan surveillance of not

more than 30 to 40 kilometers. Whereas, Indian satellite provides them the entire picture in one screen with pinpointed accuracy and precision.

➤ **Recommendations**

i. Special Focus to Modernization of Navy

Due to the swiftly changing maritime strategic environment of IOR, Pakistan needs to proactively focus on modernizing its naval force and procurement of advanced equipment. China has dominated the IOR and South China Sea for decades and remained in the new headlines. However, during the past few years India stepped into this new arena and started modernizing its navy on war footing. This change has raised great concerns for the overall security situation for Pakistan. Although Pakistan is also working on the field and modernizing its naval capabilities, the pace is comparably fairly slow from India. Pakistan needs to take special steps for Pakistan's Naval Modernization to boost up the overall capacity. On one side it will increase Pakistan's deterrence stability and at the same time it will also help China to check increasing Indian influence in the IOR. China itself is concerned about increasing its naval presence to safeguard its vital economic interests related to OBOR initiative. China is already providing Pakistan with all types of economic assistance, humanitarian aid and helping in boosting up the military skills.

Pakistan has to advance from an offensive sea denial approach to one focused on a sustained presence in the blue waters to safeguard its vital maritime interests.

ii. Indigenization of Defence Industry

The indigenization of the defence industry is one of the most important factors to attain the strategic edge in the security driven environment. India has a massive defence budget and it has developed a huge defence industry for the production of arms and military equipment. India has attained self-sufficiency in the production of defence gear and advancing in the field. Pakistan is also developing weapons and military equipment at Pakistan Ordnance Factory

(POF) Wah cant. The Karachi Shipyard and Engineering Works Limited (KS&EW Ltd) is responsible for the production of equipment for navy and shipbuilding. It can indigenously produce submarines and the factory has produced two diesel electric submarines under the supervision of French engineers. However, these industries can only accomplish the basic needs of production, maintenance and upkeep on the equipment. There is a need for modernization and advancement of technology to achieve that feat.

iii. Medium and Long-Range Defence System to close its air defence gaps

India is rapidly modernizing its defence system by developing advanced and sophisticated missile defence systems. The development of an advanced missile defence system by the Indian Navy is rapidly changing the strategic balance of power in the IOR. The missile arms race has already changed and affected the strategic landscape and unleashed an enduring missile arms race between the two countries. The action-reaction model of arms racing can vividly be seen in the Indo-Pakistan arms race. However, if we compare the pace of recent developments in naval modernization, the instant research finds that India is swiftly changing the balance of power in the IOR. India has indigenously developed a huge number of ballistic, cruise, supersonic and hypersonic missile systems and deployed in the IOR region by commissioning them in the Navy.

In the pursuit of sustaining the balance of power and enduring the security environment of IOR Pakistan needs to pay special focus to the development of medium and Long-Range defence systems. The missile systems give minimum credible deterrence and inexpensive counter strategy to any Indian adventurism. The basic challenge for Pakistan is to achieve a credible deterrence necessary for its security and avoid any arms race.

iv. Maintain Minimum Credible Deterrence in IOR

Pakistan entails the strategy of Credible Minimum Deterrence (CMD) since the two countries are going nuclear. Pakistan's nuclear weapon system and stockpile of weapons is based on the said principle. The policy is embedded in its strategic military doctrine and the armed forces are trained in line with the instant strategy. Pakistan has not aimed or completely integrated its nuclear weapons to its armed forces for execution. However, Pakistan has successfully managed to ensure deterrence stability, now it has to adopt a likely model to ensure deterrence stability in the IOR and beyond. The IOR is a new battleground and conflict zone.

v. Maritime Vigilance: Surveillance and Reconnaissance Capabilities

In response to the increased naval activities of the opposing navy, the countries embark on different groundbreaking initiatives by increasing the maritime vigilance and surveillance capabilities. The enhanced surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities can reduce piracy, human trafficking, terrorism and any attempt against the maritime interests of the country. Due to increased Indian naval activities and the expansion of their naval presence in the IOR, Pakistan needs to take serious steps for maritime vigilance. Pakistan requires advanced radar, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and other likely equipment to safeguard its maritime interests. China and Russia have deployed Sea guardian UAVs equipped with artificial intelligence (IA) integration into maritime surveillance. They hold strategic significance and operational robust capabilities.

Although in recent years Pakistan has also taken significant steps by increasing the level of their maritime vigilance and surveillance capabilities, still Pakistan has to take many

steps for furthering its competences. Pakistan's concerns on piracy and terrorism in the Gulf of Aden, Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea have compelled it to take necessary steps in this regard.

vi. Synergy and Integration in the Naval Force: Regular Naval Exercises

Pakistan has to be more focused on increasing the activities at sea for instance, by patrols, inspections and naval exercises. The naval exercises increase the operational capabilities of naval forces and are observed as the patterns of implementation of those strategies. They are necessary and good in the conventional spectrum. The naval exercises will provide synergy between different armed wings of Pakistan and will also enable the navy to deal with the traditional and non-traditional security challenges in the IOR. Furthermore, the Pakistan navy also has to conduct joint naval exercises with other navies of friendly nations including China, Iran, Indonesia, USA and Gulf countries to increase the professional skills and learn from experience sharing. The naval exercises shall also demonstrate Pakistan's will to promote peace, security and prosperity for all using the blue water for trade and economic interests.

vii. Research and Development in High Technology Areas

The research and development in the high technology areas is highly recommended and proposed to increase the functional capabilities. This concept is one of the most important factors in almost all the areas of human endeavors to increase the already practiced technologies. They help in producing new products, equipment, strategies and target-based approaches to achieve certain objectives. They help in allocating the available amount of budget to the relevant quarters which requires more consideration and need. It helps in employing the technology centric approach in modernizing the naval capabilities. This is what has long been practiced by other nations like Cold War rivals i.e., the United States and Soviet

Union. The same strategy should be employed by Pakistan due to the volatile economic situation of Pakistan. The advanced technology seems to be an important and core parameter in focusing the high technology areas in Pakistan.

viii. Enhance Human Intelligence

The study also finds and suggests that the level of human intelligence should be increased for strategic strength. Sun Tzu, the famous ancient scholar and the author of a famous book “the Art of War” has emphasized that the human intelligence and knowledge of enemy plans, strategy, location, deployment, strength and weakness, intentions and strategic installations is very important for the successful execution of war strategy policy. In this regard, Pakistan also has to work hard to gather intelligence of the neighbouring countries especially in the maritime context Pakistan must be well versed about the IOR. Pakistan should be very aware of the Indian intentions and designs for the future of IOR.

ix. Develop Strategic Partnership with China

The strategic partnership has gained most significant importance in the debates of foreign relations. China is rapidly rising as a new superpower of the world and seeking strategic partnerships with other countries for meaningful engagement for bilateral goods. The two countries already have a good faith relation and with the passage of time has gradually matured to strategic partnership and trust. The geostrategic environment of the South Asian region has also contributed greatly in establishing good faith relations on strategic grounds. Pakistan has to be vigilant in establishing these relationships by establishing mutual agreements for maritime cooperation. China is already helping Pakistan in its weapon industry and advancement in defence technology. The strategic partnership for the development of a strong and formidable naval industry. It is helpful for China itself because due to the longstanding

Chinese rivalry with India and India's China centric maritime strategy pose existential threats to the maritime interests of China. It further encompasses New Delhi's close strategic partnership with Washington and their support raises concerns for China. Therefore, Pakistan's relations with China are naturally embedded on logical grounds.

x. Exchange Strategic Partnership with Iran and Gulf Countries

The study finds that the changing strategic environment of this region after US intervention in Afghanistan and the recent developments in the region have a number of common grounds to work together. There are a number of issues for convergence and divergence between the two countries. The United States presence in the region and its conflict with China has resulted in United States close collaboration with India. Furthermore, the United States wants to Keep Iran out of the rehabilitation process of Afghanistan and regional strategic engagement. Moreover, India wants to get in close collaboration with Iran and help them to develop Chabahar port strategically in proximity with Gwadar. Although India intends to encircle Pakistan from three sides with the help of Afghanistan and Iran. However, Pakistan has always enjoyed good faith relations with Iran therefore, it has an edge of engaging with them. This is true to say that, "one can change our friends but can never change our neighbours", therefore, Iran is an important regional ally which should be taken seriously.

The Central Asian Republics and Afghanistan also want to get access to the trade through seas by using Chabahar port. It increases India's concerns for the development of Chabahar as a counter strategy to sabotage Gwadar port. This development coincided with the US withdrawal from Afghanistan and the new regime's inclination towards New Delhi. It increased the overall environment in the greater interest of India. Nevertheless, Pakistan does have a number of options to revisit its foreign policy engagement towards Iran. The Pak-Iran

relations owing to regional cooperation, integration and connectivity can pave its way towards a new era of development.

xi. Socio-Economic Development in Karachi, Baluchistan and FATA

India is exploiting Pakistan's internal vulnerabilities by supporting and backing the non-state actors and terrorist organizations. Indian alleged support for BLA, TTP, LeJ, private entities like NGOs and other likely individuals and organizations is evident. They work against the national interest of Pakistan and help in staging insurgency in the country. The TTP and BLA have specially carried out a number of terrorist activities against the national interests of Pakistan. They manipulated the sentiments of deprivation among some segments of the society.

Pakistan should take special steps for the sustainable socio-economic development in Karachi, Baluchistan and FATA. The government should take necessary steps to mark improvements in the living standard and sustainable developments of Baluchistan. Karachi is the financial hub, whereas Baluchistan and FATA are the strategically most important regions. The peace in these regions ensures stability in the country and sustainable economic development in Pakistan.

xii. Consistent Dialogue Process for Conflict Prevention

The study finds that both countries are Nuclear Weapon states with strong conventional and non-conventional capabilities. If the situation escalates to the nuclear threshold, neither side will win the war. If one side fires nuclear tipped ballistic missiles and the other detects them from before they actually impact the targeted country. They would also fire back and in the meanwhile the two countries would be under the deadliest flames of fire, radiation and contamination of explosions. It was predicted in the case of the United States and Soviet Union during the Cold War era that the intercontinental ballistic missiles would roughly take half an

hour to launch and strike the targeted area. Whereas, the other country would get a grace period for retaliation. However, in the case of India and Pakistan, the two countries are geographically connected and within minutes the entire region would be burnt to ashes.

Therefore, the two countries should consistently get engaged in the dialogue process for conflict resolution and conflict prevention. The territorial conflicts in Kashmir, Sir Creek and Siachen disputes created overwhelming hostility between them. The problems should be resolved by continuing the process of negotiations and discussions. The rationalization of conflict should be adopted so that the moderate quarters of India should also realize that the IOR can be used as a medium for prosperity of both nations rather than cultivating it into a new battleground.

Secondly, the internal security crisis situation can be disposed of by a consistent process of dialogues and negotiations among the stakeholders. The dialogue process with the ragged segments of the country should also be dealt with politically without using the forces. They should be given a chance to be a part of the political process. The politics of accommodation can reduce the sense of deprivation. Therefore, Pakistan should prevent conflict by engaging the effective and consistent process of dialogue.

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