CHAPTER VI

Military Defence of India's Maritime Interests in the Arabian Sea
Maritime History

The details of India's connection with the Ocean that bears her name have been covered by eminent historians. Our purpose will be served by dealing with its most salient aspects which highlights the influence of the sea on the history of the sub-continent enabling us to draw conclusions which might assist in formulating India's strategic interests. We shall therefore deal first with an outline history of the region; then discuss events during the last some decades that have contributed to the formation of the vacuum; and finally examine the prospects for filling it in the future.

Hundreds of years before Columbus sailed across the Atlantic, the Indian Ocean specially the Arabian sea was an important waterway for commerce and cultural exchanges between nations as far removed as China in the East and the Mediterranean states in the West. The cities of Babylon and Nineveh had trade relations with the west coast of India. Some of the archaeological remains discovered at Mohenjodaro in 3000 to 1500 B.C. come from the Red sea area. The oldest evidence of the period 1500 B.C. is in a Mantra from the Rigveda. 1 ' Do then convey us across the sea for our welfare.' Indian elephants were employed in the Euphrates valley during this period. During the thirteenth century the Malabar rulers controlled the Eastern region of the

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1. Ravi Kaul, India's Strategic Spectrum, Chanakya Publishing House-3 Thornhill Road, Allahabad, P. 47.
Arabian sea. Shipping using the straits was required to call at the capital and the maritime administration regulated traffic through the shipping lanes. After eleventh century the weaknesses of the Hindu Kingdoms paved the way for the establishment of Muslim supremacy in Indian waters during the thirteenth century, thus ending the golden period of Indian maritime history.

It is therefore clearly established that the control of the seas around India until the thirteenth century was predominantly Indians. This included freedom of navigation in the Arabian sea and the command of the Malacca straits and as a result control of the trade between China & the west. However, complete freedom of trade and navigation was normally allowed and there were few instances of friction of any kind. Both the Arabs and the Chinese crossed the Arabian sea to trade with each other and it was the Arabs who derived tremendous benefit as intermediaries of trade between India & Europe. With the downfall of the Hindu Kingdoms this trade passed completely into hands of the Arabs.

Thus the brightest period of Indian economic prosperity lasted well into the 13th century while the country’s maritime activities were unfettered and began to decline immediately, these activities were interfered with. It is no coincidence that this was the most prosperous period in Indian history during which trade and commerce flourished and Indian goods
were in great demand throughout the world. This reputation was fact so high that in an attempt to find a sea route to India the Europeans discovered America. This prosperity and the greatness that went with it was bound up with its commerce and that commerce depended largely on its maritime activities which in turn depended for their sustenance on maritime strength. The Indian example is not a instance of a country's prosperity being dependant on maritime activity, but the England, Holland, Dutch and Portugal are the countries, get prosperity through their effective maritime activities, or due to her shipping continuously plying the oceans and the numerous tranquil inland waterways. England and Holland had thousands of ships spread all over the world carrying merchandise which they sold at enormous profit. The resulting wealth enabled them to maintain strong Navies which in turn supported their quest for empire in somany countries as well as in India also. Like this the Arabs and the other coastal states of Arabian sea are wanting to get prosperity with the supported Naval Commerce and trade depending upon the Arabian sea routes linked with Gulf, Red sea & Suez canal etc. and give facilities of trading with Europe, North West Asia and other countries.

We would do well to remember the vital lessons that maritime history has to teach us, living as we do on land and hence being more concerned with events connected with it to the detriment of our understanding of the events at sea which have
profundely affected the course of world history.

The first successful European attempt to reach India was made when Vasco da Gama reached Calicut in May, 1498. The context for possession and control of the seas around India was waged almost continuously throughout the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries until England established complete control after her decisive victory over the French as far away as at Trafalgar in 1805, converting the Ocean into a British lake.

The future of the area is of vital concern to India because of the Suez Canal. Any event that affects the future of this Canal affects the economic development of India. Approximately 70% of India's trade flows through the Suez Canal. Apart from the delay of three to four weeks in arrivals and departures it may cost the country Rs. 25 to 30 crores annually in additional freight rates.

The Arab-Israeli conflict of 1967 once again illustrated the importance of the canal to India. The increase in freight rates had an adverse effect on the country's developing economy. The maintenance of an open waterway across the isthmus of Suez must remain one of the pillars on which the foundation of India's international policy must be based.

The upsurge of nationalism in the area resulted in the gradual withdrawal of the British culminating in their relinquishing power in Aden, which commands the entrance to the Red
sea, to the new Republic of south Yemen. During the British withdrawal Pakistan has been making a strong bid to replace British influence in the area by establishing a Muslim bloc. There is an ever present danger that these oil rich states which excessive foreign exchange holdings are liable to be manipulated by interested powers. Pakistan has recently had some success in obtaining some of this foreign exchange for the purchase of sophisticated defence equipment. Should she achieve any success in persuading the countries of the area to deny India essential oil requirements during a period of hostilities such a development would be most imminent to the country's interests while in the long run India might achieve self-sufficiency in crude oil, for at least another decade or so she will remain dependent on this region for her requirements of this vital commodity.

The Cardinal importance of the maintenance of Anglo-American oil interests to the West have resulted in Britain selling sophisticated air defence equipment to Saudi Arabia and warships to Iran, while United States is also selling Phantom aircraft to Iran. There is little doubt that this unnecessary addition to the strength of the royalists will be countered by the Soviet Union strengthening their opponents.

India demands careful consideration of the effects of the recent strengthening of ties between Pakistan and Iran, which became noticeable during the Indo-Pak conflict of Sept.
1965. Apart from the acquisition of sophisticated ships and aircraft, Iran has been involved in the routing of large numbers of surplus F 86 aircraft from Europe to Pakistan whose final destination has not been ascertained. India's dependence on Persian crude to feed her oil refineries is still considerable and alternative sources until we become self-sufficient need investigation. Relations between Iran and Pakistan have more recently become cool owing to a clash of interest between them in West Asia.

Coming now to the Indian sub-continent we find that Pakistan has short coastline on the western side of India. Lying as this do at the northern extremities of the Arabian sea they are most disadvantageously situated in narrow neck making Pakistani access to the major trade routes difficult during periods of hostilities, should India care to take advantage of this aspect of the situation. On the other hand, should she adopt a weak-kneed attitude, this area with bases at Karachi, could be employed by Pakistan, in collusion with China or independently to stifle India's foreign trade.

The most prominent feature of this sea gives to South-West Asia and India a concave shape which is most favourable feature for maritime activities. This shape gives India a facility of controlling of the important trade routes, except those in the extreme southward, could be exercised by the allocation of minimal resources which would reap benefits out of
all proportion to the effort expended. It would indeed be fool-
lish not to maintain this option for it is an option which
would simultaneously impress both our friends and foes alike;
provide security for our foreign trade; and deter ambitious
neighbours from embarking on unpremeditated ventures without
due consideration. Indeed, India is strong enough to project
power into the western reaches of the Arabian sea could split
the world in two. This is due to the strategic importance of
her location on the globe.

A major Trade routes from the Persian Gulf and the Red
sea to south East Asia and beyond passes through the Arabian
sea. Therefore the Arabian sea is most important for Indian
security and dangerous for defence. Some of the islands in or
around the Arabian sea are more important because of India's
dependence on maritime trade any of these islands falling into
unfriendly hands would seriously jeopardize our war potential
in any protracted conflict. In this view India has given help
to Mauritius. The Suez-Aiden-Colombo route is the most heavily
travelled. One hundred million tons of Cargo passing through
annually.2 These narrow waters may be avoided only at great
expense and loss of time.

The Power relationships in the Afro-Asian region will
be predominantly based on maritime power. We must therefore
now examine the power that is being developed in the Arabian sea region by various nations. The cold war has played a significant part in the development of the navies of the countries bordering the Arabian sea. Thus Pakistan has a navy consisting of ______ Cruiser, ______ submarines and half a dozen frigates and destroyers largely supported by United States funds till today - Pakistan has acquired 3 Daphne class submarines from the French and two or three W class submarines from China. 3

Iran has acquired 4 modern destroyers and one refitted ship from Britain and earlier has gotten enough naval support and equipments from America. In view of the recent complicity of Iran in the F-86 aircraft supply to Pakistan we should not be surprised if these ships are funnelled to Pakistan. India can not afford to discount the consequences of these acquisitions when weighing the balance of power in the Arabian sea area.

The emergence of an aggressive communist state in China and its concentration on building up its submarine arm will enable her to project her sea power into the Arabian sea in the future. If China is offered bases to operate from by countries hostile to us it might prove to be a severe blow against our vital interests by enabling many more submarines to operate in the Arabian sea because naval warfare can not be fought by surface and air maritime forces. It would be advisable for the

Chinese not to attempt to interfere with the flow of trade in the Arabian sea as she is likely to lose more than India, provided we are not fettered by political considerations should the Chinese attempt to employ their submarines in this sea.

The Chinese attack of India in Oct. 1962, is likely to have a profound effect on the future of the region. The event on the has forced the country to face northwards and has diverted its attention from the sea, upon which its livelihood and prosperity depend we must bear in mind that up to the 13th century, when India was making full use of this sea for purposes of trade and commerce we were a prosperous nation. When the control declined and trade passed into the hands of foreigners, the country became progressively poorer. The vital need to export and thus sustain our industries through imports will be a continuous requirement as will the use of this sea for their free and unmolested passage.

There is a considerable power pressure in the Arabian sea covering the western boundary of India. In this area India owing a important strategical position due to power vacuum. A favourable geographical situation is a great asset in the projection of power, power itself is today based primarily on technological achievement. India's Industrial capacity and technological capability will soon be able to meet most of the demands that may be placed upon them to provide the instruments of power
necessary to fill the vacuum. Inspite of all these factors and most expansive wars with Pakistan and China.

Apart from the use of this sea for trade and the fishing industry, modern science has made possible the extraction of large quantities of oil and fertilizer and through the science of oceanography is investigating the possibilities of opening up many new vistas which have remained buried in the deep for centuries. The exploitation of the wealth in the Arabian sea is a possibility India could ill afford to overlook. The rapid expanding merchant fleet, which is an important element of maritime power, will require the protection of a much larger naval force than we currently possess. It must become independent in shipbuilding industry. India has become capable to design her own warships by own architects with indigenous machinery and weapon system. The basic requirement is for India to build up her maritime strength, which includes its land and air components.

In Indo-Pak war 1965 and 1971, the Indians must have wondered what the Navy has done with the help of Army and Air Force staking everything in the defence of the country. The war at sea is for the most part slow, silent and unrewarding. Most of our ships were at sea during the Indo-Pak war controlling 'certain areas in Arabian sea coast line while denying them to the enemy to ensure that she does not use it further. Hence the navy's task in the conflict was to ensure the un-
interrupted flow of merchant shipping to and from India ports. The Pakistan Navy did not challenge the control of India's major trade routes. They, however, did carry out a sneak raid on Dwarka on the Kathiawar coast which is the part of India adjacent to the Pakistan port of Karachi. There can be no doubt that the Bombardment created immediate psychological stir but was of no value as far as the war effort was concerned apart from the press. In war, it is pointless to waste one's resources in attacks on the civil population, destruction of the enemy war potential counts in the attacks. India has the naval superiority at sea to deter Pakistan from initiating a costly war and when the land forces of the country were locked in combat the Navy has plans to assist in the overall strategy to defeat the enemy in the west.

Our aim is to achieve a level of maritime power capability to meet the powers whose shores are washed by the Arabian sea and others by launching of an indigenous construction programme. This means that we must build a Navy capable of dealing simultaneously with the maritime threats from Pakistan and Iran bordering this sea.

The Indian fleet must have a capability of controlling the waters of the Arabian sea, when required for her own use or deny their use to her enemies in the future. This will require different types of ships, aircraft and submarines to make our maritime power and controlling of sea. It will not be
possible to exercise control of the western approaches to the Arabian sea by land based maritime aircraft for many years to come. Hence new weapon system become necessary for these areas. Support ships, Patrol craft, Amphibious forces and devices are important requirements which must also be met if the nation's interests are to be safeguarded.

Broadly speaking, that this is the bases harbours and ports on which we should attempt to build the strong maritime power to face the problems and threats in the sea. In this regard we now have adequate perfect harbours ports and bases in the Arabian sea to meet any challenge from enemy side Goa on the west coast and an airfield in the Laccadives have the ability to sur-veillance of two hundred miles westward and thus make life more uncomfortable for our prospective enemies.

No nation has permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests. Our interests demand that we assemble sufficient power to fill the vacuum before some other country or group of powers whose interests are inimical to ours are able to do so.

Our maritime history also reveals that the Europeans exercised their dominance by firmly controlling the waters around India and the gate ways thereto. They realised that the bulk of the world's commerce and trade was carried on via the sea and that the sanctity of the sea routes had therefore
to be preserved. The lack of any base outside India and on offshore island territories deprived the Indians of defence in depth, whereas the British concentrated on securing every strategic island territory that would give them any advantage. These island bases in the hands of alien powers would have been a constant threat to them. 4 If the control of the Arabian sea is again disputed, India will be no more safe.

During the early days of the British in Indian waters, the East India company armed some trading vessels for use as a protection force against attacks on its Cargo ships. This force evolved into the Indian Marine, later called the Bombay Marine. When British colonial power was established in the Indian sub-continent, the force underwent some transformation and, with the dawn of the 20th century, its role became essentially that of a troop and hydrographic survey service, called the Royal Indian Marine. The officers and key personnel were British and the other staff were Indians, recruited mainly from the north Konkan coastal belt. 5

The Royal Indian Marine participated in the I W.W., during which time it expanded; after the war it suffered severe


5. Ibid, P. 15.
severe retrenchment as a measure of economy. The maritime
defence of India was then entrusted to the British Navy, who
maintained as East Indies fleet. This absolute reliance on
the British Navy sorely deprived Indians of the opportunity
to gain modern seafaring experience.

However, prominent Indians decried their enforced sub-
servience to the British and pressed for the creation of an
independent naval force, then manned primarily by Indians. The
government of India relented somewhat and acting on the recom-
mandations of the Rawlinson Committee, decided to introduce
a small combatant force which, in time, became the Royal Indi-
an Navy, with headquarters at Bombay. The Royal Indian Navy
took the responsibility of local naval defence and maintained
a squadron of six escort vessels, which could cooperate with
the British Navy. This was the small beginning that set the
stage for India's subsequent naval development.6

The II W.W, which erupted in 1939 saw a rapid expansion
of the Royal Indian Navy. The chat field committee had recom-
mended that suitable merchant ships be converted into war
vessels to augment India's naval defence. This was quickly
implemented. Simultaneously, some new naval training centres
were established. Before 1934, the Royal Indian Navy was

officered entirely by the British, whilst the sailors were recruited mostly from the seafaring communities of the Konkan coast. They were good seamen, but their educational attainments were negligible. With the heavy demands of the war and the introduction of more sophisticated armament and equipment, it became necessary to widen the recruitment base.

The compulsions of the II W.W. certainly played a large part in the growth of the Royal Indian Navy and the process of Indianisation. Since war provided the most realistic school for training, an extraordinarily large body of Indian officers and sailors was able to rapidly gain naval experience.

After the partition of India in 1947, the Royal Indian Navy was also shared in the ratio of 60:40. The Naval training establishments located at Karachi, became Pakistani property and the Indian Navy had the arduous task of setting up training facilities from scratch.

When India became a republic, the Royal Indian Navy became the Indian Navy. India pursued a policy of countrywide recruitment to the Navy, whose homogeneity moved P.M. Nehru to once remark: "India's Navy is a microcosm of what I believe India should be a community living together in amity and friendship, irrespective of caste, creed of region."  

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7. Ibid, P. 17;
After Independence, most of the British officers of the Royal Indian Navy chose to leave, and India had to obtain some senior officers on loan from the British Navy for some years. These officers helped to lay the foundations of a modern Navy and to spread a greater consciousness of the Navy's role and importance, before the Government.

By the end of the fifties, the Indian Navy was able to acquire the cruiser Delhi, the destroyer Fajput, Ranjit, and Rana, the Hunt Class destroyer Godavari, Gomati and Ganga, the Cruiser Hysoor and the aircraft carrier Vikrant. Thus the Indian officers and sailors have become a master in the techniques of operating a fleet.

In the process of modernisation of Navy the Government placed orders in the U.K. for type 12 anti-submarines frigates type 14 anti-submarine frigates. These were the modern ships being build for the Royal Navy. After that so many developments have been made in increasing the strength, capability and attacking power by improving ports and harbours designs, and purchasing and building new devices and weapon systems and techniques, and establishing training centres, and renovating consciousness, cooperative activities and morale etc. Due to this Indian Navy has proved a superior Naval force in the world nowadays or till to day.
The Sea Power Concept

A power which dominates the sea has decisive advantages over its rivals. It can control the maritime trade, which is becoming more and more important. It can easily transport its army to fight in any area and thus dominate even the littoral, because the means of communication over the high seas, even today, are much superior to, and faster than, those available overland. It can use its navy for blockade, for shore bombardment and for landing troops and material at a given point and time, and thus threaten its rivals. If pressed it can even retreat into the high seas and be sure that its forces will not be totally annihilated. These advantages, which are valid even today, when sea power has to compete with air power, were even more valuable two centuries ago, when the military strategists were studying the concept of sea power and its place in the global or regional strategy.

Several theories were propounded on the need to dominate the oceans and seas. One of the first persons who popularized the concept of sea power was Alfred Thayer Mahan (1840-1914). He wrote several books to highlight the need to control the high seas. There is no doubt that Mahan theory had a great influence upon the evolution of naval strategy, even today his basic presumptions are valid, despite the fact that the navy has to face a serious challenge from the air force and from the missile system. Control of the waves and the waters beneath
then, is all the more important today, in the context of the sophisticated weapon system, like the nuclear-powered submarine, capable of launching a medium or long range ballistic or cruise missile even when submerged. This new weapon system in combination with the traditional vessels, permits the navy of a big power not only to command the waves and the seas beneath, but also increases the range of its armament from the high seas to any place on the earth. Thus, the navy can truely play a strategic role which is global in the real sense.

The significance of the ocean strategy alone is not sufficient to understand fully the present day cold war confrontation and its effects upon a given area. The whole thing has to be studied in the context of four basic points: evolution of the weapon system, strategy based upon the available weapon system, diplomatic moves made by the big powers to accommodate their weapon system and their global strategy in a given area, and the local responses to the big power presence. This is beside the traditional conventional - interventionist role of the navy.

Till the II W.W., oceans and seas played a limited role in the strategic considerations of the big powers. The conventional naval weapon system, then available to the military

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planers, made it possible for a marine power to deny the use of the high seas to its rival, but a true land power could still survive and fight back. The evolution of the air power (long range strategic bombers and fighters which have the capacity to dominate the air space) posed serious challenges to the concept of naval supremacy. The concept of air power gained pre-eminence during the II W.W. It seemed that air power, in coordination with nuclear weapons, would make the concept of sea power redundant. For some time, even a strong naval power like the USA, began to rely more & more upon its strategic Air Command (SAC) and ground forces, to deter its potential enemy, the USSR. That was due to two main factors: firstly, during the II. W.W, the new strategic weapon system atom bomb dropped from an aircraft—was relied upon to provide the main strategic deterrence. The navy was assigned the traditional task of maintaining control over the high seas, and thus providing facilities for the deployment of the western forces on the periphery of the USSR and China. The big powers made several modifications in their weapon systems at that time to attain greater sophistications.

The USA was busy devising ways and means which would retain the advantage of the new weapon system based upon long-range missiles armed with nuclear weapons, and yet evade Counter-attacks by finding the weapon platform. The sea, which had been more or less neglected for over a decade, became important
once again. A new weapon system was devised, which would enable those missiles to be launched from platforms which could be fixed on naval vessels. Attempts were made to enable the conventional surface ships to launch the cruise missile like the Regulus, but they were not considered safe enough. The missiles were placed in submarines which could hide deep under the waves. Nuclear powered submarines capable of firing, even when submerged, long-range missiles armed with nuclear weapons heralded the optimum point in the weapon system which could be used as a major strategic deterrent. The control of the high seas became, once again, a matter of crucial importance in the context of the strategy of the big powers. Western and Eastern bloc countries had made pacts to strengthen their powers. The USA also signed bilateral mutual defence agreements with several countries, which enable to USA to maintain its bases there. With the perfection of the inter-continental ballistic missile (ICBM) and the threat of massive nuclear deterrence, the emphasis upon the SAC bomber bases was gradually reduce. Several of these bases were closed during the 1960s.9 There was also a comparative reduction in the number of ground forces stationed in Europe and Asia. During that period the Navy played only a limited strategic role. But with the introduction of the new weapon system based upon the SLM, since 1962, the navy has been assigned the most important strategic role. Protection

of nuclear submarines, the problem of their communication system and counter measures against a similar weapon system, employed by the enemy, govern the strategic considerations of the big powers now, and will continue to govern than till a new weapon system replaces the present one. Now, the countries are not based upon the bombers of the ICBM for the purpose of strategic deterrence.

The weapon systems which have developed and the strategy which has changed to suit them, have had an impact upon the Arabian sea also. But the danger point was not this area but was located in Europe. Asia and especially the Arabian sea area, was considered at that time to be a low priority area. Neither USA nor the USSR had the capacity to start and sustain a major confrontation in this area at the time. By the middle of 1950s the USA decided to extend its system of bases to the Afro-Asian world also, because USA had no SAC bases either in Iran or in Pakistan. The importance of the area, however, increased greatly after the possibility of the deployment of the Polaris submarines in the Indian Ocean area by the USA. That did not mean that the littoral became important as a land base against the Soviet Union. It had only a limited value in that sense. But the control of the littoral became important to ensure a trouble free functioning of the new weapon system which was being deployed in the Arabian sea. By implication it meant that the Arabian sea area should be kept free from the
American S.BM programme, like the Polaris submarines, should provide communication facilities, without which these submarines can not operate properly and should be free from any hostile power which would seek to limit the American and his allies naval activities in the area.

The confrontation between the Super powers on the land and the sea is also involved them in regional politics, with the result that the fall-out of the cold war affected the littoral states in the Arabian sea area as well. The policy of non-alignment, which sought away out of that dilemma, failed to win support from many of the littoral states. The USA in its bid to winover local powers, pumped economic and military aid in the areas of its influence, thus creating mini-cold wars in the region. The Soviet Union also developed friendly ties with several states in the area. Thus the Arabian sea area which was free from the super power rivalry in the first half of the 1950s, was subsequently dominated by it. Since the regional tensions are linked with the super power rivalry in the area, which in is influenced by the weapon systems and the strategy based upon them, their crisis-management would become increasingly difficult, since the area is going to be more and more important for the super powers and the big powers, in their future global strategy.

The change-over, from the land-based strategy to an ocean-based strategy, brought about a detente on the land to some extent in Asia and fully in Europe. But whereas the European Detente might be more lasting, the detente in Asia has proved to be illusory. Europe is getting united and is strong, economically & militarily, to pose as a third force. The Arabian sea littoral is weak and divided. The new weapon system, the super power confrontation has moved from the land to the sea, an area with no clear territorial demarcation, and, therefore, is likely to pose more problems to those who are situated on its littoral. The Arabian sea thus becomes involved in the super power confrontation, based upon a weapon system which in effect demands control of the high seas for its effective utilization. The confrontation, which started after the system was perfected, will continue until a new system is evolved which seas redundant, unless the littoral states succeed in making the area a peace zone.

Mahan lists a people's tendency for seafaring as an important ingredient of sea power. India is not only peopled with 'born sailors' along her coast but as we know today, those from inland areas have proved to be equally good seafarers during peace and war. There is therefore no dearth of 'manpower' for seapower and the superstitions about crossing the seas, which were prevalent in some parts of the country in bygone days, no longer hinder the nurturing of a large community with a yen for seafaring.
Mahan's use of the word 'commerce' conjures up a picture of not only an instinct for trade but also its infrastructure—well-developed ports and harbours efficiently linked with the centres of production and distribution; ships of trade to suit every type of cargo; shipbuilding and ship-repairing industries; adequate and efficient navigational aids to the mariner; the financial apparatus to support commerce, such as banking, insurance, and such other facilities; and a skilled people to function effectively in this milieu.

**Regulations of Marine Transportation**

The 1958 Geneva Conventions codified a number of provisions that applied to marine transportation and thus became international law. The convention on the territorial sea provides that merchant ships have a right of innocent passage through the territorial sea of other states. Passage is defined as navigation through the territorial sea for the purpose either of traversing that area without entering internal waters or of making for the high seas from internal waters. It is considered innocent as long as it is not prejudicial to the peace, good order, or security of coastal states. The coastal state

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11. **Luc Cuyven**, *Ocean Users & their Regulation*, p. 120.
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11. Luc Cuyvers, Ocean Users & their Regulation, P. 120.
is also given a number of rights: it may require compliance with national regulations in the territorial sea and it can take the necessary steps to prevent passage that is not innocent. There is still some controversy on the latter subject, however, particularly with respect to the passage of foreign warships.

The Geneva convention on the high seas codified the principle of freedom of navigation. As a consequence, the high seas are beyond the control and responsibility of any one state, and it has been necessary to develop an additional body of law to regulate particular aspects of navigation in these waters.

The high seas convention also deals with the legal connection between ships and the countries in which they are registered. Generally, the flag state retains exclusive jurisdiction over its vessels on the high seas and to a lesser extent when the ships are in the territorial sea of another country. As a result, a ship is never beyond the reach of law since the flag state can exercise jurisdiction over it to prevent unacceptable conduct. The convention further obliges states to ensure compliance with the international navigation regulations. However, as noted earlier this obligation is not always undertaken by a number of flag of convenience countries.

The rules codified by the 1958 conventions were in them-
selves not enough to deal with the many problems of marine transportation. There was need for measures to prevent collisions or to deal with other safety matters to employment.

The principal marine safety agreement is the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (the SOLAS Convention), which is 1980 superseded a 1960 Convention of the same name. That convention is a set of regulations on construction, life saving appliances, radio communication, the safety of navigation, and the carriage of dangerous goods. These regulations are applicable to the ships registered in the countries that ratified the agreement.

International Maritime Organisation also administers a set of traffic regulations aimed at preventing collisions at sea. The regulations to the 1960 SOLAS Convention established common standards for lights, signals, and maneuvers. They applied to all vessels on the high seas or in navigable waters, other than ports and certain inland bodies of water. After failure of previous regulations a set of rules on the use of radar and to require compliance with traffic separation schemes a series of separated traffic lanes IMO had recommended in heavily trafficked areas. Many vessels ignored the traffic separation schemes, sometimes with tragic results. To prevent such occurrences, IMO in 1972 convened a diplomatic conference.

12. Ibid, p. 121.
in London which produced the convention on the international Regulations for Preventing Collisions at sea, also called the collision Regulations or simply COLREG.13 This agreement went into force in July 1977, making the use of traffic separation schemes compulsory. This does not mean that everyone is obediently following the schemes. Violations, in fact, occur every day but, as is the case in practically the entire body of international navigation law, only the flag state has jurisdiction over them, unless the violation took place within the jurisdiction of another state.

A great number of accidents are caused by human error, collisions are attributable to poor seaman ship and could be avoided with alertness and prudence. Error can never be ruled out as a factor, but if errors are caused by a lack of training or poor seamanship and such occurings can be reduced by stringent regulations.

The ILO has recently adopted a convention on Minimum Standards in Merchant ships along with a number of recommendations to its already extensive international seafarer’s Code.

Following a number of accidents which demonstrated the appalling task of training and a number of uncertified people manning the bridges of flag of convenience vessels, IMO entered

13. Ibid, P. 121.
the picture with the adoption of the 1978 convention on standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping, which entered into force on April 28 1984. Another important agreement on maritime safety promoted by IMO is the 1966 International convention on Load Lines, which provides for the painting of Plimsoll lines on ships. Moreover, the Convention requires contracting governments to prevent ships from putting to sea without the appropriate International Load Line Certificates, and this essentially to avoid overloading, which increases the stress on a vessel significantly.

Number of treaties deal with some of the jurisdictional problems that emerge with collisions and other incidents. The International Convention for the Unification of Certain rules relating to Penal jurisdiction in matters of collision or other incidents of Navigation provides that, in the even of a collision involving the responsibility of someone on the ship, only the flag state may initiate criminal proceedings or arrest the ship. The International convention relating to the arrest of sea-going ships, on the otherhand, established the principle that a ship from a contracting state may be arrested within the jurisdiction of another state in respect of any maritime claim. Finally, the International Convention on certain rules concerning jurisdiction in matters of collision seeks to unify the rules of private international law by giving plaintiffs the right to sue before a court in the country where the defendant lives, where the collision took place, or where the arrest was
made.

In spite of these agreements, all of which were concluded in the 1950s, it still could be very difficult to find someone responsible for a mishap. There come in sight an example of Torrey Canyon and its sister ships arrest and not release until the insurers paid a $7,500,000 damage settlement. Fortunately, the situation has improved somewhat with the adoption of the various liability agreements enacted since the Torrey Canyon incident.

First stated in 1609 by the Dutch scholar Hugo Grotius that all states have equal rights to use the high seas, subject to regard for the rights of others and they cannot become private property. The only restrictions placed on the freedom of the high seas were that such uses did not infringe on the rights of others, and that each coastal nation had jurisdiction three nautical miles seawards from its shores. But with the change of circumstances and demands of the people the above sea law was not fit for the maritime actions. The role of oceans as medium of communication has multiplied. Militarily ocean based strategy of global dimensions has become possible. Sea based weapon system has come with problems of deterrence, power balance and war and peace. And a host of oceanic issues

have cropped up arousing divergences of national interests.

India claimed only limited rights in the sea because valuable minerals and other things underlying within territorial waters. Territorial waters meant only three miles of course. In the changed circumstances and economic interests the extension of national rights over larger and larger parts of the offshore waters have become more significant. Along with developing countries India made a Presidential Proclamation on August 30, 1955, declaring sovereign rights over the seabed and subsoil of the continental shelf adjoining its territory, without specifying any limit. It was affirmed that the limit of territorial sea and the contiguous zone would be 12 miles.15

The first United Nations conference held at Geneva in 1958 relating to the laws of sea adopted four conventions about the territorial sea and the contiguous zone, the high seas, fisheries and conservation of the living resources of the high seas, and the continental shelf. This conference however failed to agree on the breadth of the territorial sea and the extent of the exclusive fisheries zone. A second United Nations conference on the laws of the sea held in 1960 to resolve these two issues was remained unsuccessful. Because some newly emerged nations began to look upon international law as an alien

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system imposed by the western countries for the protection of their interests. The conference failed also because of the political polarisation around the 3 and 12 mile limits of territorial waters. Then in 1970 the U.N. General assembly decided to convene the 3rd U.N. conference on the law of the sea to deal comprehensively with the entire range of issues involved. A 42 members sea bed committee was constituted for this purpose but it failed also to agree on drafting articles for a convention and on rules of procedure. The General Assembly adopted the Declaration of principles governing the sea bed, the ocean floor, and the subsoil thereof, beyond the limits of national jurisdiction. It declared among other things that the area concerned and its resources are the common heritage of mankind and would be subject to an international regime established by an international treaty generally agreed upon.

The 3rd U.N. conference on law of the sea held in New York in Dec. 1973, would seem that the traditional division of the sea into territorial waters and the high seas is being replaced by functional divisions with distinct regimes. These relates to internal waters, territorial waters, the contiguous zone, the continental shelf, the Exclusive Economic Zone and the high seas.

Internal waters refer to those parts of the sea that are so closely linked with the land as to be considered an internal part thereof and subject to the sovereignty of the particular coastal state. They can freely exercised their authority over
these waters and foreign ships can use these waters with the mercy of that coastal state.

Territorial waters limit accepted by the international community is 12 miles. The coastal state exercised sovereignty over its territorial waters except for the right of innocent passage for vessels and warships of other nations.

The contiguous zone is an area where the coastal state may take steps necessary to prevent and punish infringement of its customs, fiscal, sanitary and immigration laws. Its limit recognised in 1958 in 12 miles. 16

The continental shelf is defined in 1958 as the sea bed and subsoil of submarine areas adjacent to the coast but outside the area of territorial waters, to a depth of 200 metres or beyond that limit, where the exploitation of the natural resources of the areas must be possible. The exercise their sovereign rights therefore the purpose of exploring it and exploiting its natural resources. Its limit is 200 nautical miles. 17

E.E.Z. includes an area beyond and adjacent to the territorial sea, extending up to a distance of 200 nautical miles from

17. Ibid, p. 74.
the baselines from which the breadth of territorial waters is measured. The coastal state has sovereign rights regarding exploration of natural resources, establishment of airfields, installations, economic exploration as production of energy from the water, current and winds and the preservation of marine environment, in navigation, overflight and the freedom of movement.

To replace the old concept of sea laws, the Laws of the sea conferences in 1977 have been bogged down on the vital aspect of this issue, the exploitation of the precious resources of the high seas with the help of developed technology and skilled mining processes. The discussion on some suggestions take place at the 1978 conference on the Laws of the sea and give some new laws on the agreed questions.

Although the conference has not so far succeeded in bringing about a convention on the laws of the sea, several points have been clarified. It is accepted that the old rules governing the use of the sea can no longer be relied upon to satisfy the international community as a whole. The sea law Treaty may be revised like any other document. This possibility might or might not be distant, but meanwhile ordinary laws governing security would come into play. A resourceful maritime state might now be expected to make up for what freedoms have been surrendered under the law of the sea. The sea law might open a hornet's nest of problems.
Naval Activities in the Arabian Sea Area

Like other seas and oceans, the Arabian sea area also has a long maritime and Naval history going back to ancient times. The Indus valley, the Nile Valley and the Tigris-Euphrates Valley Civilizations had maintained maritime contacts. Recently the remnants of a large dockyard, about 710 feet by 210 feet, were excavated at Lothal in Gujarat. Another such site was found at Sutkagen, 300 miles west of Karachi.

During the pre-Christian era the Nanda and the Maurya dynasties were in close contact with the Greco-Roman Empires. It has been recorded that Alexander the Great built a harbour at Patala on the Indus and with the help of local pilots he sailed from there towards the Persian Gulf. 18 Half of his army was transported by ships. The 1500 miles ( ) long sea-voyage of Nearchus, Alexander's admiral, in 326 B.C., was probably the first case when such a huge army was transported by sea in the Arabian sea area. 19

Maritime activities were well regulated at that time in India. Arthashastra mentions admiralty as one of the administrative divisions. Kautilya made a distinction between the inland water ways and the overseas maritime activities. Different sets of laws governed these maritime activities were con-

fined to northern India. During that period the regularity of
monsoon, astronomy and guidance by stars during the night became
possible for navigation. The Mahaya yantra (magnetic com-
pass) was invented by the Indians at that time.

Maritime contacts between the people of the Arabian sea
area and of the Mediterranean region grew with improvements in
the construction of bigger ships and in the ways of navigation.
In the period of Chandragupta II (Vikramaditya) maritime ac-
tivities on the Gujrat coast were boosted still further. Several
and Ghogha were flourishing in this area. Socotra was a junction
of the maritime trade of the Arabian Coast, the African
coast and the Red Sea.

The Sassanids of Persia also were the maritime power in
the Arabian sea at that time. They used the Arabian sea to
reach the China via the straits of Malacca. The Arabs also
gained their maritime power in the region after the advent of
Islam. During all these years the Arabian sea area was, more
the Arabian sea area was, more or less, a zone of peaceful mar-
time trade and no serious naval activities took place there,
except for the minor abortive attempts of the Arabs to attack
Sind from the west, during the 7th and 8th centuries. The
eastern zone was also not dormant when the maritime activities
were flourishing in the west.

Vijayanagar was the last of the local maritime empires
in the India. It flourished in the 14th century and maintained links both with the east and the west. There was a great stress upon maritime trade and commerce though not upon naval activities. Some precautions were taken against local pirates but warships were not constructed. The Arab world was being occupied by the Turks. The Iranians were recovering from the Mongol on slaught and were busy containing the Turks. India was fragmented into several small states, which were fighting amongst themselves. Thus, when a new naval power, Portugal, entered the Arabian sea it did not have to face any strong local naval opposition.

The European naval powers, once they come to the Arabian sea, did not have to make any special effort to acquire naval superiority in that area. Their naval superiority was, in fact, the result of their involvement in the European power politics. At that time, with the advent of gun-powder and larger ships, high seas had become a contested area. European ships merchant ships as well as fighting ships—regularly sailed into the Arabian sea and fought with their naval rivals. Gradually, the naval supremacy of some European powers enabled them to dominate the Arabian sea and deny opportunities to their European and local rivals in this area. There European Powers also began to dominate the littorals and thus heralded

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M. Ibid, p. 3
the era of European imperialism in the region.

When the Portuguese entered in the Arabian sea, the littoral powers had practically lost their naval traditions, though maritime trade was still being carried on by them. Their small naval vessels could not face the European ships mounted with heavier guns and were more sea-worthy. It would not be wrong to say that with their tradition of free maritime trade and commerce, these local states looked upon the European powers, when they reached the main trading outposts in the Arabian sea area, as trading nations and not as conquerors. The Arabian sea littoral where they reached first had never before been subjected to a determined naval attack and enjoyed an element of surprise.

Vasco da Gama reached Calicut on 11 May 1498 across the Arabian sea from Malindi, North of Mombasa within a short period of twenty-two days. He was welcomed by Zamorin, the local ruler, as a new trading partner. But very soon it became clear that the Portuguese had other ideas besides free trade and commerce. They have not only wanted a trade monopoly which would have harmed the established local traders, both Indian as well as Arab, but they also indulged in piracy and naval intimidation on the Arabian sea (high seas) and the blockade of the ports. Calicut was blockaded in 1503 and the first

naval clash took place between the ships of the á zamorin and the Portuguese ships. 22 Though the local fleet suffered great losses the Portuguese also had to withdraw and the first round ended in a draw. In the subsequent decades the Portuguese, led by Albuquerque, persisted in their attacks and succeeded in establishing their foothold.

The Conflict for supremacy over the trade routes, between the Portuguese and the local powers, in the Arabian sea, lasted for about eighty years. The á zamorin sought the help of the Sultan of Egypt who sent some ships to fight the Portuguese led by Mir Hussain. The combined fleet did action against Portuguese during 1507-1509 without any decisive conclusion. The Turks also sent a large fleet under Sulaiman Pasha in 1538, but when a powerful Portuguese fleet appeared, the Turkish fleet, under the cover of darkness, conducted a strategic retreat and returned to its ports. It was left to the local powers to challenge the Portuguese and thwart their attempts to occupy the Indian coast in Arabian sea. 23

The Portuguese were able to occupy Goa in 1510. They already had control over some points on the East African Coast. They occupied and fortified Hormuz in 1508. The Portuguese were the first to have understood the concept of sea-power and to have evolved a naval strategy to suit their requirements in the context of the Arabian sea. Though their basic aim was to acquire trade monopoly, they occupied the strategic area which commanded the entrance to the Arabian sea: Socotra near the
Bab-al-Mandeb, Hormuz which commands the entrance to the Persian Gulf etc. It is interesting to note that the naval powers which appeared on the scene after them, including the super powers of today, have more or less followed the naval strategy as initiated by the Portuguese in the Arabian sea. After the Portuguese, the Dutch and the French adopted it, but Britain, which, by dominating the area during 19th century and the first half of the present century, perfected it.

Several European Powers followed in the footsteps of the Portuguese and reached the Arabian sea. Their presence in the area was influenced partly by trade considerations and partly by the religious and political controversy between the Catholics and the Protestants. This economic and religious rivalry was also influenced by the inter-state rivalry in Europe and very often the rise and fall of a European Power in Arabian sea was determined, not by its position here but by the fortunes of war in the European theatre.

The Dutch were the next European Power, who mostly were busy to get entry and establishment of outposts in the Arabian sea, till a longtime, but remained successful to enter the Arabian sea with the fall of Cochin in 1663 with a desperate struggle. After English and the French entry they had disappeared. The Portuguese Power by 1660s in the Indian Ocean had been contained and they had practically been driven out of their strongholds in that area except for a few pockets like
Goa, Daman and Diu in Arabian sea in India. The Portuguese decline can be explained as partly due to their involvement in the European Politics. Dutch did not survive the naval competition and were finally forced to relinquish their hold over most of their trading posts and to be content only with Indonesia.

The intense naval activity in the Arabian sea area during that period was largely confined to foreign powers. The littoral states were only like on lookers of the grim struggle, not even knowing its implication for them. Even the Mughal Empire in India, which was the strongest local power in the Arabian sea at that time, had hardly any navy. Some small naval craft were in use but naval activity was confined to the inland waterways and the coastal waters around Bengal. Though the Mughals had conquered Gujarat, which was the centre of maritime trade with West Asia and Europe, they did not develop a strong navy to protect their coast or their sea borne trade because they believed in land-oriented Strategy not in ocean strategy. As long as there was a strong, central authority on the mainland, the land power could prevent foreign penetration but the moment it dis-integrated, sea power enabled the Europeans to conquer and subjugate it.

It can be said that Indians were not totally unaware of the threat from the sea. The Arabian sea littoral states had witnessed, over a number of decades, the gradual expansion of
foreign naval activities in the area, and had taken whatever action was possible under the circumstances. The Zamorin had fought a protracted naval campaign against the Portuguese. The rising Maratha Power fought against the growing British presence in the Arabian sea coast of the Indian subcontinent.

Shivaji, the great Maratha leader, laid the foundation of the Maratha Navy in 1659. Naval activities were initiated which led to the construction of a series of naval forts on the Konkan coast, as well as a modest ship building programme. In 1679, the Maratha fleet occupied the island of Khanderi which even today commands the entrance to Bombay. British efforts to dislodge the Marathas from there failed even though they were assisted by the Sidis of Janjira, who were the local naval rivals of the Marathas. The Maratha naval power continued to expand even after the death of Shivaji. Several strategic naval bases, Svarndurg and Vijaydurg, were constructed. The Maratha fleet, at its glory, was led by the renounced admiral, Kanhoji Angre, who took over its command in 1699.

The Marathas had to face a very adverse combination of forces. On the land they were opposed by the Mughal Empire and on the high seas they were challenged by the Europeans, who were often supported by the Sidis. The Mughals also supported the Sidis against the Marathas. Despite these handicaps, the

Marathas challenged the foreign powers and made their naval presence felt in the Konkan area. The foreign powers tried to destroy the Maratha naval base at Vijaydurg. Repeated attempts were made by England in 1717, 1718, 1720 and 1722, but it failed to dislodge the Marathas, despite the fact that in the 1722 attempt, the English were also helped by the Portuguese. In 1724, a large Dutch fleet also attacked Vijaydurg but had to retreat. The Marathas under the Angre were proving a hard nut to crack. 25

The Maratha ships were small, mostly shallow draft vessels, lightly armed, but fast. The Marathas used the element of surprise and their numerical superiority against the bigger ocean-going and heavily armed European vessels. The heavily armed European vessels. The weapon system used by the Marathas influenced their naval strategy. The type of ships that were available to them forced them to adopt a shore-based naval strategy and the Europeans were left to command the sea. The result was that whereas the Marathas could deny the Konkan coast to the foreigners, they could neither attack them on the high seas nor destroy their bases in other parts of the Arabian sea area. The death of Kanhoji Angre in 1729 was a big blow to the Maratha Navy. His successors continued the fight and did challenge the Europeans for some time in Arabian sea

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\textsuperscript{25} Ibid, P. 7.
area. Vijaydurg was captured by the English Navy in 1755. That marked the end of the Maratha Navy and also the end of Indian Naval resistance to European penetration. 26

Besides the Marathas, the people of Muscat and Oman were also active in opposing the Portuguese and other foreign naval presence in the area. These people were the traditional seafarers, who for centuries had conducted maritime trade in the Arabian sea area. The Portuguese tried to break their monopoly. Socotra was occupied by the Portuguese in 1507. They also occupied Hormuz in 1508, and continued to occupy it, off and on, till the local people and the English Navy combined to drive them away, by the middle of the 17th century. The power of the rulers of Muscat increased gradually and they began to dislodge the Portuguese even from their other Indian Ocean outposts. But the local naval renaissance in the Persian Gulf area was short lived. The English who succeeded the Portuguese, maintained their naval predominance and reinforced their political position by signing protectorate agreements with the small Sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf area. 27

The French India company was formed in 1664 and the French ships began to operate in this area by 1667. The rive-

27. Ibid, P. 8.
ries amongst the European Powers in this area were affecting the maritime trade and commerce in the Arabian sea also continuously till some decades. French naval activities had been proved inferior to English naval activities in this crucial area of Indian Ocean. 28

The emergence of British naval power in the Indian Ocean as well as in the Arabian sea area went hand in hand with the acquisition of bases and the control of several strategic islands on the littoral. The British had already established their presence in the Persian Gulf after they had defeated the Portuguese in 1622. Gradually they began to expand their sphere of influence and by the end of the 19th century they were able to control the whole of that region. They occupied Aden in 1839 and thus neutralized Socotra, which dominated the entrance to the Red sea. Mauritius was acquired from the French in 1810. 29 The British position in the Arabian sea area was made secure by the establishment of bases at strategic points like the Suez, Aden and Bahrain etc. British control over the Indian sub-continent also made available to it sufficient economic resources as well as manpower, not only to defend but also to expand its rule in the area.

The British dominance over the area was also facilitated

28. Ibid., p. 8.
29. Ibid., p. 9.
on account of the Industrial Revolution, as Britain could make rapid improvements in its weapon system and the means of communication. These advances made it possible for its military planners to evolve naval strategies suitable for their national requirements. Thus Britain was able to dominate the Arabian sea, not only because it had made extra efforts to conquer the area, but also, because its efforts to contain the European rivals had led to the creation of a strong navy, which could be used either in the Arabian sea or in other theatres, in support of the British global policy. The Naval actions elsewhere decided the fate of the Arabian sea area. That lesson of history is valid even today.

Great Britain began losing its pre-eminent position after the II W.W. Its war losses crippled its economy and sapped its national strength, thus leading to a gradual withdrawal from the Indian sub-continent, west Asia, and other places. It will be difficult to halt this tide, and sooner or later Britain will have to relinquish its hold over the Arabian sea islands also. Following the decline of the British Power, the earlier British Position in the area is being contested by the local Afro-Asian states and by new superpowers. The old order has not been replaced by a new one as yet.

When India was partitioned in 1947, the ships of the Royal Indian Navy were shared between India and Pakistan in the ratio of 60:40. The force India inherited was by no means
commensurate with her new status and responsibilities. Therefore India decided to form a strong naval policy and made every possible development in her Navy to reach at the aim of safeguarding her national interest.

In 1947 when Pakistani invaded Kashmir, the Indian Navy was not involved. In 1962, when Chinese opened hostilities, the Indian Navy was not committed to action. In 1965, when Pakistan attacked India, the Navy was directed not to involve in offensive action, but to confine itself to safeguarding India’s coastline and protecting the country’s maritime trade.

In 1971, however, when hostilities once again broke out between India and Pakistan, the navy was permitted to adopt a strategy aimed at immediately wresting the initiative from the aggressor, and it lost no time in doing so. From the day Pakistani forces attacked Indian airfields, they navy swung into action with a large number of ageing ships and a small number of submarines, patrol vessels, and missile boats purchased from the Soviet Union. On the night of December 4, a composite force of missile boats and other surface ships struck Karachi. Missile boats are designed for defence of harbours, but the Navy made ingenious use of them to attack Pakistani ships and shore installations at Karachi and its heavy losses caused indespread demoralisation. In the confusion its own gunboats were attacked on a night when the Indians were no
where in the vicinity of Karachi. Most of its large warships stayed in harbour. There were frequent rumours of Indian amphibious landings near Karachi. A second attack on Karachi was launched on Dec. 7. The harbour was hit again and the pall of smoke that hung over Karachi days after the Navy's attacks on the oil tanks further demoralised the Pakistanis.

The blockade of the Pakistani ports in the Arabian sea was total. No ships can enter or leave them. On the western seaboard, resulted in the complete stoppage of supplies to Karachi. The bombardment of almost all Pakistani reserves of oil fuel centres and the prevention of any replenishments adversely affected the fighting capacity of Pakistan's forces and led to an early termination of the War in the Arabian sea. A number of Pakistani merchant ships were captured by the Indian Navy, whereas neither a single Indian ship nor its Cargo fell into enemy hands. Neutral merchant ships in Karachi port approached the Government of India for safe passage from Karachi when the troubled waters become a threat to their security.

The course of the war at sea in 1971 underscored the lessons of history and military geography. India's need for sea power hum was reestablished in the eyes of the nation and the Navy's pride received a great fillip.

Thus the lessons of contemporary history, no lesson than
those of ancient history, point to the importance of the seas to India. Her maritime development during the colonial period was slow and constrained. Yet, even within this confined framework, Indians who were allowed the opportunity revealed a natural aptitude for sea faring and the intelligence to master its advancing technology. This maritime development can not be viewed in the context of the Navy's growth alone but it must take into its sweep the history of the merchant marine & the ship building Industry also.

India's Maritime Security

India's growing maritime interests as well as the newly formulated law of the sea, has widened India's maritime horizon from the earlier 3 mile territorial sea to the present 12 mile territorial sea, 200 mile exclusive economic zone. The continental shelf and the deep seabed beyond it right up to Antarctica, the farthest shores of the Arabian sea and the Indian Ocean. This vast horizon has also thrust upon India a new responsibility to formulate its long term maritime policy commensurable with its national ethos and its regional and international environment.

30. R.C. Sharma, The Ocean (Realities & Prospects, Rajesh Publications, New Delhi, P. 291.)
Security of maritime interests has to be treated as an integral part of India's maritime policy. Hence, there is need to discuss and evolve a comprehensive national policy with a view to protecting and promoting India's interests and objectives, both in times of war and of peace, in what can be defined as its zones of maritime interests and activities. These zones are, broadly speaking, national and transnational. National maritime zone can be further divided into sub-zones like the coast line and islands, territorial sea, contiguous zone, exclusive economic zone and the continental shelf. Despite the different legal status of these sub-zones, they fall broadly within the framework of national maritime zone, and hence they will be governed by a broad framework of common maritime policy. The maritime policy in the transnational zone, i.e., the high seas, sea-bed and sub-soil thereof, will be governed not only by a different set of considerations of international law but also by political, economic and diplomatic norms different from those governing the national zone.

Maritime strategy in broad terms, mean safeguarding the freedom of passage of the high seas, especially keeping in view the sea lanes of strategic importance for the nations promoting and protecting national efforts aimed at the exploitation of maritime resources in national and transnational zones, preventing the exploitation of national resources by unauthorised persons and protecting the islands, the coasts, the immediate hinterland as well as the installations in the national zone.
Maritime security, to be most effective, has to be maintained by a concerted efforts at legal and diplomatic levels as well as by appropriate use of military and para-military (Coastguard) forces and various organizations in the civilian sector. The civilian sector, in this case, will include the law enforcing organizations like the customs and the police, organization like the DOD and various ministries at the centre and the state level which are entrusted with the task of decision making and formulating legal and administrative framework in the context of maritime activities, as well as merchant shipping, fisheries, ONGC and such other public and private enterprises that are concerned with the exploitation of maritime resources.

The role of these diverse actors need to be integrated if a fruitful and comprehensive maritime policy, suitable not only in times of peace but also capable of responding to threats to maritime security to various thresholds, has to be evolved. Such an integrated framework would dovetail, at national level, policies and functions of variables ranging from merchant shipping, fisheries and the ONGC to be customs, coastguard, the navy and even the airforce. This can be achieved by assigning to each of them a well-defined objectives, by ensuring a commonality of systems and equipment operated by them and through a network of information exchange mechanism & mutually supporting roles.
India's Maritime Interests

India's maritime policy should highlight three basic variables: interest identification, exploitation and protection. Thus, maritime security, as a concept, goes deeper than preparedness for naval operations in times of war, and should be seen within the above mentioned framework of identification, exploitation and protection of India's overall maritime interests. National maritime strategy, therefore, will have to be designed keeping in view the legal, economic, technological, diplomatic & military constraints. A clear line has to be drawn between India's maritime strategies vis-a-vis the national and the transnational zones despite the fact that the two in some sectors might overlap.

India's interests in transnational maritime zone are governed today primarily by three major considerations. They are the exploitation of seabed resources beyond the limits of state jurisdiction, exploitation of living resources in international waters and the freedom of navigation on the highseas and the international waterways.

India has recently ventured in the field of deep sea-bed mining, especially of the manganese nodules. The promotion of that interest would involve, besides inputs of international law and diplomacy, building an appropriate infrastructure both with domestic resources and with the transfer of technology as
well as local and foreign financial inputs. India has taken
certain steps in that direction through the medium of inter-
national law and diplomacy (pioneer status) to advance its
claims in that field. It has also initiated some moves with
a view to developing appropriate technology by local R & D and
by transfer of technology from abroad. More inputs will be
needed for creating a technological infra-structure suitable
for the task set ahead. careful planning will be essential to
define the long-term programme in that field.

Despite huge resources in fisheries in the Arabian sea,
India has as yet developed neither adequate expertise for the
necessary infrastructure for their optimum exploitation. It
is true of most other littoral states of the Arabian sea also.

It is, however, encouraging that certain steps have
been initiated in that direction. Protection of long-term fish-
ery interest not only in the EEZ but also in the maritime zone
beyond it should be a part of the maritime policy. However,
the main thrust in that direction has to be largely civilian;
both at the government and non-government levels. Scholars,
legal experts, environmentalists as well as officials of
various departments connected with the fisheries and diplomats
will have to pool their resources to workout a long term policy.
It the countries of Arabian sea region have to conserve their
maritime living resources, they must mobilize adequate public
opinion.
The Arabian sea has large maritime trade. Free access to the sea lanes both on the high seas as well as through the choke points, whether natural or manmade, like the Bab-al-Manābīb, straits of Ḥormuz, the Suez canal etc., thus become vital not only of the regional powers but also of other developed and developing countries.

International law is fairly clear on the question of freedom of navigation on the high seas and the right of innocent passage. But diplomacy is still needed to maintain an environment where these freedoms can be enjoyed. Freedom of navigation might be impaired due to several factors, especially due to escalation of conflictual situations. The blocking of the Suez canal following the wars of 1956 and 1967 and the present threat to the freedom of navigation in the Gulf and the strait of Ḥormuz are clear indicators where conflictual environment can and does deny freedom of navigation. These choke points and sea lanes are threatened not only by regional rivalries but also by the direct and indirect impact of great power rivalry. Thus, not only international law but also diplomacy will have to be invoked to maintain peace and freedom of transit. In their context the concept of Arabian sea as, a part of Indian Ocean, a area of peace needs to be emphasized all the more.

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Unlike the transnational maritime area, a state has greater latitude to plan and execute maritime policy in its national maritime zone, whether it be the question of optimum exploitation of resources or their security. The new limits of state jurisdiction, now extending up to 200 mile EEZ and to the continental shelf, are the gifts of the agreement arising out of the view condification of the law of the sea. But the new limits of state jurisdiction in matters of national maritime zone have to be re-affirmed, for diplomatic reasons, through bilateral or multi-lateral agreements with neighbouring states.

India has negotiated successfully such agreements with many littoral states of Arabian sea, would not only help to define national maritime zone on a regional basis but also help to promote regional cooperation in maritime matters. A regional approach to maritime policy will, in turn, not only protect the interests of each state but also help to promote cooperation in practice. This especially true in the case of fisheries where mutually beneficial support like port facilities, food processing, marketing, exchange of meteorological data, technology and services and concerted efforts towards conservation of natural resources can serve as a useful means to bring about regional cooperation in a more meaningful way. Such efforts need to be encouraged.

Pending the creation of regional framework, India can...
on its own, take steps to exploit fishery resources. Despite the best of the will, India has not succeeded in the fruitful exploitation of living resources in national and transnational maritime zones. India will have to create an infrastructure that will include modern fishing harbours with cold storage and food processing industries, service and repair facilities, shipping industry geared to the manufacture of modern coastal fishing boats and big and small trawlers equipped with improved means of storage, radio communication, navigation, radar, sonar etc. Some steps are being taken in that direction but much remains to be done. These fishing harbours will also be useful not only for the coastal trade but also for the customs, police and coastguard in peace time and the navy in times of war. Thus, fishery will not only generate a momentum of its own but also help strengthen the larger framework of national economy as well as security both in times of peace and war.

Exploitation of resources on the continental-shelf is largely a matter of national policy and has little to do with regional cooperation. The main thrust today is directed towards the off-shore exploration and exploitation of oil and natural gas. India is forging ahead in that field under the overall operation of the ONGC too will have to coordinate its activities with other agencies like those responsible for the security of the platform, pipeline and on-shore installations (i.e. the Navy, the Coastguard, and the police), those responsible for environmental problems, fisheries etc.
Framework for Maritime Security

Maritime interests need to be protected at all levels and at all times. Since these interests are wide ranging, it is essential to evolve an integrated structure whose components while enjoying autonomy of operation at their individual level, can be fitted into an overall mutually supporting security structure. Some of these components are the police and the customs, ONOC, fisheries department etc. representing the civilian authority, the para-military force like the coast-guard, and the military forces like the navy and the airforce (and also the army whenever deemed necessary). All of them have to be integrated into a composite maritime security environment for optimum results.

To coordinate their activities during peace and war not only have their roles to be identified in the overall framework of maritime security but their equipment and training have also to be designed on the basis of this commonality of purpose. If such a framework can be designed, then the activities of these variables can be coordinated at zonal, regional and national level at each appropriate field of operation.

Maritime security policy will have to be evolved at the national level but it will have to be implemented at regional and more particularly at zonal levels. These such regions can be clearly identified: the Arabian see (including the Lakshad-
weep islands), the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman-Nicobar group of islands. Each of these three regions will be further subdivided into two to four zones depending upon economic, administrative and tactical factors. These zones will coordinate the activities of the civilian sectors like that of the police and the customs in the territorial waters and of the coastguard in the areas and the continental-shelf. Personnel, equipment and facilities with those of the military forces, especially the Navy, even in times of peace, so that the infrastructure thus created can be fully utilized in times of war. Thus, a multitiered structure can be erected which will not only strengthen each other but also the overall maritime security of India.

It is not only possible to create such an infrastructure. First of all one will have to accept that concept and then evolve an appropriate policy at national level. Subsequently, the framework and the timetable for its implementation will have to be worked out in details at the operational level; especially at the levels of administration, equipment and support. One of the main thrusts of this policy will be to find out the commonalities in these fields at different levels so as to facilitate their interaction.

At the equipment and support level this common approach will influence the acquisition of appropriate types of surface vessels, aircrafts, radar, radio, communication facilities,
support facilities, like port and dockyard, bunkering, repair workshop and lines of communication with the hinterland. Stress will have to be put on the commonality of equipments that will be used by different organisations. A small but fast 30–50 ton coastal vessel equipped with radar and radio communication can be used by the police, the customs and the coastguard in the territorial waters or near the coast. A large 200–300 ton vessel can be useful for the ONGC, Coastguard and the Navy for operations further away from the coast and for a longer duration. Similarly, small radars, radio communication set and sonar equipment can be used by the fishing vessels. The data collected by the maritime reconnaissance aircraft of the coastguard will be useful to the Navy which will fill the gaps in its own maritime reconnaissance at no extra cost. Similarly, there can be commonality of helicopters used by the ONGC, the Coastguard and the Navy.

Such commonality of equipment and support at various levels will offer several advantages. It will be easier to train and integrate the personnel at all levels, in one composite framework, so that all organizations can work as parts of a bigger team. Also, production, use, training and repair to these equipment can be better streamlined. Moreover, by combining the civilian and para-military inputs to national security, defence burden will be distributed more equitably among all those sectors that stand to benefit from the maritime policy.
Military defence of India's Maritime Interests

Maritime defence against foreign threat is primarily the task of the Navy but because of peculiar geopolitical location of India, the Navy will have to integrate its strategy with that of the air force and even the army whenever it is tactically essential. India's Naval defence has to be geared keeping in view three different environments the Arabian sea demands a different strategy.

India's Naval defence strategy will have to be based upon the concept of a force projection that is sufficient to deter trans-regional powers from imposing their will in the region to the determinant of India's national interests. However, this strategy can not be purely India-based, at least in the near future, for two main reasons. Firstly, despite the tall claims of having acquired a so-called bluewater navy, India will find it difficult to attain air-naval capability comparable to that of the super power in the Arabian sea area. Secondly, if India does attain that capability, it will scare at least some of the littoral powers into seeking extra-regional linkages that will, in turn, further entrench them in the area of Arabian sea. Hence the best strategy is to support

32. Ibid, P. 296.
the concept of Arabian sea as well as Indian Ocean as a zone of peace through littoral states and other neighbouring countries cooperation. Thus, at least for some years to come, India's Arabian sea strategy will have to have primarily a diplomatic rather than a military thrust.

The Arabian sea is of great strategic importance not only for India but also for others. It is one of the high tension areas of the world. Moreover, Indo-Pakistani relations directly influence Indian strategy in the Arabian sea. It is an open sea and dominates India’s Sea lanes to Europe, the Soviet Union, the Americas, Africa and west Asia. Through it passes bulk of India's trade including its oil supply. Arabian sea also includes strategic islands, especially the Lakshadweep group, and major off-shore oil installations. They are, however, sufficiently close to the coast and can be provided with air cover and naval protection, in times of emergency, from the bases on the mainland itself. While not ignoring the need to provide basic point defence against air launched or submarine launched threat to Indian strategic largest in the Arabian sea, it can be well argued that because of the limited range of operations (300-400 miles) in the Arabian sea, it is possible to project land based air power, over that area. That, however,

33. Ibid. P. 296.
points to the need for a greater interaction between the navy and the airforce in the defence of the national interests in the Arabian sea. 34

Despite above factor, the long term Indian Naval strategy in the Arabian sea will be determined in phases, among other things, by the need to protect the chain of islands that are within the reach of the shore-based combat aircrafts must be strengthened. Also the majority of these islands are very sparsely populated and the Chain of islands is so extended from north to south that they can not provide protection for themselves. Hence, their main defence against determined adversary will have to be based on the mainland. That is one lesson that India will have to learn from the Falk land conflict.

If the Indian defence is to be geared for the protection of these islands, India will not only have to upgrade its military presence there but also create an amphibious capability to project a force at least at the brigade level. Such a capability will have to be based at least around two medium aircraft carriers, each capable of operating at least one squadron of combat aircraft, two amphibious ships with medium helicopters for rapid tactical deployment of troops from ship to shore, at least one large tank landing ship, several landing craft, about

34. Ibid. P. 297.
four roton roll-off supply vessels, oil and water tankers etc. besides an adequate member of fighting ships and submarines as escort.

In other wards, India will need a medium taskforce equipped for amphibious operation upto a distance of about miles from the Indian coast because that is the distance of those islands in Arabian sea from the major naval bases in the western coast. At the movement India has limited long-range amphibious capability. That capability needs to be augmented over the years if India wishes to extend in future adequate military protection to its islands in the Arabian sea when the super power's presence is not ignorable and Pakistan also.

Thus India will need two different types of navies for these two different types of environments in the Arabian sea. Yet, the Indian naval power, even when fully developed, will be primarily defensive in nature. It might give India a presence of a blue water capability but in terms of real fire power and force projection for sea-control strategy it will still be far from adequate to project India as a naval power in the Arabian sea capable of launching sea-borne operations even against the medium powers in the region.
Maritime Security & National Development

Maritime interests are a part of larger national interests and have to be promoted and protected by the combined efforts of the civilian as well as defence sectors. In a developing country, navy alone cannot protect the maritime interests at all times, i.e. both in times of peace and war, without eroding its primary task of naval defence in time of war. Other agencies must, therefore, participate in the task of maritime security. The interaction of these agencies in matters related to security of national interest, the country must seek to expand its base of national defence. If the base is surely military in nature then it fails to draw the maximum input from the available national resources. Hence, ways and means should be found to integrate national defence within the larger framework of national development.

In the case of maritime defence such a dovetailing is possible at different levels because of the possibility of common use of several items in the civilian and military sectors. Some of these common denominators can be based upon:

(a) Software technology like navigational equipment, radar, radio communication, sonar, and other electronic items.

(b) Propulsion technology like different types of power plant, gear propeller etc.
(c) Platforms like surface vessels, aircraft, hovercraft and their construction and repair facilities, and

(d) Support facilities like food processing, port, dockyard, workshop, overland communication (roads, railways & airports) etc.

Since public and private sectors can nationally benefit but also greatly contribute to the strengthening of several of these sectors, a coordinated policy of exploration as well as security of maritime interests can lead to fruitful interaction at public and private levels which, in turn, will strengthen the linkage of national defence and national development.

The spin off of such a strategy will be an accelerated growth of maritime consciousness at national level, a feeling that is largely dormant at the moment. India, which was a maritime nation once, became land-oriented. Maritime awareness has to be rekindled if India has not only to evolve a viable maritime policy but also to regain its rightful place among the family of nations.
The maritime strategy of a country is rooted in its national strategy which is decided to promoting and safeguarding its national interests. National strategy is total in concept and has political and diplomatic, economic and commercial, cultural, geophysical and military facets. Maritime strategy may appear to be a mere offshoot of military strategy; but scrutiny reveals that it has larger connotations because, politically and economically, the Arabian sea has the most eclipsing international character.

We have seen during the colonial era, sea power was projected as great distances from the shores of the ruling countries in order to conquer and defend colonies or to protect profitable trade. We have to say that even during the current period of political-de-colonisation, the seas are being used to exert politico-military pressure and for what has been described as a new form of colonisation the attempt by certain developed countries to secure the commanding heights in the regime of sea exploitation as Arabian sea in the Indian Ocean.

Certainly, non-alignment, involving the abstaining from the military pacts, has been strong, consistent characteristic of India's national strategy. It has suited her well. India, with a active & independent foreign policy, has sought to widen her areas of friendship and work confidently for peace and cooperation amongst nations of Arabian sea, politically & economically. She has strained every vesve to build up her own economy and whenever possible, contributed to the political
liberation and economic development of her friends in the developing world. She has tried many times to defend herself against a series of aggressions.

It is pointed out that during the fifties and until the Chinese aggression, India's national strategy lacked adequate military content; that, after 1962, the Army's strength was doubled; the Airforce development speeded up, and the military aspect of national strategy acquired continental moorings; that for the seventies and beyond, a stronger emphasis must be placed on maritime strategy and a more balanced military development. In present time we can not ignore this ample need of maritime strategy in the strong.

The use of sea power in war time has been frequent in this century, including the post W.W. II Period. On several times, naval task forces have been used to influence events by rapid movements in this area of actual tension. This deterrence is carefully graduated to achieve the aim of controlling or containing the situation without shooting as far as possible. Still everyday gunboat diplomacy is active. As far as India is concerned her peace strategy would be a continuation of her earlier policy with certain modifications to suit the changing times.