CHAPTER VII

Conclusions & Suggestions
Conclusions

In the preceding chapters, we have discussed and analysed at length the various aspects concerning the Arabian sea in India's security. There, we summarise the major findings of the study and answer, at least tentatively, the question with this study began. The Arabian sea region is in greater turmoil today than ever before.

It has been recorded Geopoliticaly during pre-Christian era when Nand and Mauryan dynasties established their contact with Greco-Roman Empire. In beginning Alexander the great has built a harbour at Patala on the Indus river to go towards the Persian Gulf. In 323 B.C. first time Alexander's admiral 'Nearchus' transported his army through 1500 mile long sea voyage in Arabian sea area of Indian Ocean. During Chandragupta Vikramaditya some ports were developed on the Gujrat coast to establish contacts with the people of Arabian sea. Dwarka (The Gateway) one of the important port at that time. Besides Veraval and Ghogha port were also flourished in that area. Sancor (Dvip of Shukhadhava) was a junction of maritime trade of Arabian coast, African coast and Red sea. During A.D. 3 Pressia expanded their activities and travelled up to China via straits of Malacca. After the advent of Islam Arabs regained their maritime position in the Arabian sea area and since remained a zone of peace up to 7th & 8th century.

The constant maritime activities are found in Arabian Sea during Europeans. Vasco de Gama reached Calicut in 1498 after
crossing the Malindi north of Mombasa. On his arrival he was welcomed by the local ruler 'Zamorin'. The first Nand clash took place in 1503 between Portuguese and the local ruler 'Zamorin' which ended in a draw after a great loss of both. Since continuously nearly 80 years, there was a conflict of supremacy over trade routes between the Portuguese and local powers. The local ruler of coastal India has sought the help of the others and a combined conflict was launched against Portuguese during 1507-09 but they could not succeeded. Later on in 1537 Turky also send a fleet against Portuguese but they also had failed. But local rulers were engaged against Portuguese to occupy the Indian coast. They harassed them continuously but due to their small ships which were lightly armed were not capable of long distance operations on the sea and hence they were not able to contain the Portuguese naval power in the Arabian sea.

Portuguese occupied Socotra in 1507 Hormuz in 1508, Goa in 1510. They already had a control over some points on the western of Arabian sea and eastern coast of Africa. They were the first who had understood the concept of sea power and evolved a naval strategy to save their interests in the Arabian sea. Their basic interests were to occupy strategic points for monopoly our trade and they occupied Socotra near the Bal-al-Mandeb, Hormuz which commands the entrance to the Persian Gulf in the Arabian sea. Besides they also occupied Malacca which commands the out-let to China and Eastern Africa coast island Mogadishu, Mombasa and Zanjibar. After the Portuguese, the Dutch
and French also followed the same naval strategy as adopted by Portugal but Britain has dominated this sea during nineteenth century and the half of this century.

Portuguese had contained and thrown away during 1660 except Goa, Daman and Diu. It was the period of Mughal Empire in India which was probably the strongest local power in Arabian sea at that time, had hardly any navy. Naval activities were confined to the inland waterways and Gujrat coastal area through small naval crafts. The Gujrat coast was the centre of maritime trade with west Asia and Europe in the Arabian sea. Mughal power was land oriented they had not given seriously thought regarding sea power to command this sea but they had taken whatever action was possible under the circumstances to protect themselves against foreign naval activities in Arabian sea.

Shivajee the great Maratha leader had laid the foundation of Maratha Navy in 1659. He has developed a Maratha fleet and established a shipbuilding programme. Maratha fleet has occupied the island of Khandari in Arabian sea which even today commands the entrance to Bombey. Besides they had also constructed several strategic naval bases like swarndurg and Vijaidurg in the Arabian sea. Maratha were challenged by the Europeans in 1917, 1718, 1720 and 1722 AD continuously but could not succeed.

After the death of Maratha admiral Kanhojee in 1728, they
had lost their control over the sea belt near the Konkan and in 1755 Britishers captured Vajaidurg that marked the end of Maratha's power in Arabian sea coast area.

Besides, Europeans were also opposed by the people of Muscat and Oman in this region. These people were the traditional fares, who, for a centuries had conducted maritime trade in the Arabian sea. Britishers, successor of Portuguse maintained their naval predominance and reinforced their political position by signing protectorate agreements with the small sheikhdoms in the Persian Gulf and Arabian sea littoral states. They occupied Aden in 1839 and thus neutralized Socotra which dominated the entrance to the Red Sea. They had also neutralized the presence of France in their region during this period. After the complete withdrawal of Portuguse in 1622 Britishers established their presence in Persian Gulf area and at the end of 19th century A.D., They were able to control whole region of the Arabian sea. They developed their bases at strategic points like Suez, Aden, Bahrain in Arabian sea region. Later on Britain began losing its pre-eminent position after the second world war. After India's independence in 1947 Britishers have withdrawal themselves from India as well as from Indian Ocean region. Americans has taken the place of British influence strategically and politically. They established their Naval bases at Diego Garcia and formed a central command in the Arabian sea.

India being a most popular state of the world as well as having a long coastline, has forced to play greater attention to the ocean resources. It has acquired economic sovereignty
over a vast stretch of sea—about two million sq. kms. The scale of scientific technological and industrial effort needed in India to exploit its large EEZ and the deep sea-bed would have to be massive. Unlike other coastal state of the third world, India has awakened to the great possibilities in the oceans. Its ocean's development activities have been stepped up in the 1980s; the effort is ambitious in its scope and spectacular in the results already achieved. Indian major economic interest is offshore oil development. Though off-shore oil exploration commenced in 1962, it was only in the 1970s that it was taken up in earnest. With the discovery in 1914 of the Hydrocarbon bonanza at the Bombay High, a large area located 70 to 120 miles northwest of Bombay, India's off-shore oil production began to surge. From zero oil production 1975-76 it rose to 12.8 million tons in 1982-83, providing almost two third of the total crude oil production in the country. It is expected to reach 17 million tons in 1983-84 and 22 million tons in 1985-86. Because of the accelerated production of oil from Bombay High, the off-shore crude production target for the sixth five year plan (1980-85) was enhanced from 51.3 million metric tons to 63.10 million metric tons.

India's oil and Natural Gas Commission (ONGC) has been conducting extensive seismic surveys in the Indian continental self—an area of 380,000 sq. kms. and the continental slope 400,000 sq. kms. over the past decade. The success ratio of exploration drilling has been encouraging. Besides the Bombay off-shore region, where the majority off-shore reserves lie, ONGC
has discovered oil in Godavari, Krishna and Palk Bay basins and Gas in Andaman offshore. Indications of gas are also available in structures of Pondicherry. The gas from Bombay High is helping to generate 240 MW of electricity for Maharashtra grid at Uran. It is also being fed to couple of chemical and fertiliser plants. The gas would also be used to run a large 500 mw power station in Bombay at the end of 1984. Apart from this the Geological Survey of India has undertaken extensive survey programme to explore mineral resources on the continental shelf and deep seabed. In addition the Antarctica expeditions are expected to give a boost to Indian research in oceanography, geology, meteorology and allied sciences. With India's entry into the selective Antarctic club in 1983, it is expected to maintain a stake in future mineral resource development of the Antarctic.

Harnessing of Alternative energy resources is also being studied as a part of ocean development. The engineering design of India's first plant to produce electricity from the ocean is ready. The ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC) plant would produce electricity by utilising the temperature difference between surface and deeper layers of ocean waters. A plant of 1 to 1.6 mw capacity is to be built a Kavaratty in Lakshadeepa Islands. The commission for alternative sources of energy (CASF) and other institutions are collaborating on the project. The studies are also been carried out on the proposal for tidal power stations in the Gulf of Katch in collaboration with the French. The total tidal potential in Gulf is believed to be
around 1,2000 mw.

Besides the other economic interests of India in the Arabian sea area is its trade with the Gulf countries. Indian fresh fruits and vegetables are being flown regularly to the Gulf countries on commercial basis. Since 1975, there have risen fivefold by early 1979.

India's security is influenced by anticipated changes in several variables at global, regional and sub-regional levels. It is also influenced by events on its western flank in Andaman sea region. Three major factors will continue to dominate the scene: the Arab-Israeli question, Islamic reassertion, and future of oil. These three factors not only influence India's foreign policy but also domestic policy and hence need careful assessment.

India has been deeply involved, both politically and emotionally in the Arab-Israeli war since the lost six decades if not more. Today that question has been reduced to two major issues; the Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories, including Golan heights, and restoring their legitimate rights to the Palestinian people. Unlike the past decades when Arabs had rejected the very concept of negotiated settlement with the Jews, to day Arabs are on a diplomatic offensive and are almost challenging the ruling elite of Israel to come to a negotiated settlement. While the Arabs, including the PLO leaders have changed their interests. Indian policy still has to reflect
that changing mood vis-a-vis the basic Arab Israel question. An updated appreciation of Arab-Israel relations becomes essential if Indian has to frame its west Asia policy on a sound footing and not act as the last of the radical Arab states.

Such strategic importance of the Arabian Sea area is mainly due to geographical location, the important sea routes which traverse it, and the rich natural resources of the densely populated countries on its shores. The sea routes of the Arabian sea area connect by way of the Persian Gulf and the Red sea, the countries of the for east and Australia with Middle East and by of the Suez canal, the For East and Australia with Europe. In this region, are located rich natural resources mainly wool, jute, tea, tin, rubber, gold, copper and magnesium in addition to its most important natural resource, namely oil in the western Arabian sea. In recent years, the USA, western Europe and Japan have become increasingly reliant on oil from the Persian Gulf and this dependence is likely to persist into the future. Most of these oil movements have to go through the Arabian sea. Another reason why this sea region has high strategic value, is the role it can play in the strategic nuclear rivalry between the regional & world powers.

The strategic importance of the Arabian sea area and the awareness among major maritime powers that naval power is a prime lever of influence, were among the major factors behind the rapid escalation of power rivalry in its waters. The concept of naval task force as an instrument of influence and a
means of applying pressure is not new. In the past, especially in the 19th century, the naval powers resorted to gunboat diplomacy and "showing the flag" whenever their status or claims were challenged in the area or country where they had direct interests.

The changing situation of the world has changed the strategic dimensions of this sea region. The retreat of USSR from the cold war has created more new problems to central & south Asia. In the post cold war period, the emergence of Gulf crises and mobilization of US forces in the region has proved the period of one superpower and also confirm that America has their interests in Arabian sea in 1990s. At present America is taking 700 million barrel oil per day from the Gulf, and in coming years up to 1995 it is expected to reach up to 1400 million barrel per day. Besides, America's allies like Japan and all the entire European countries are primarily dependent on Gulf oil. Due to such dependency of oil, US always very much concern with Gulf on account of that US navy's central command H.Q. has been stationed in this region to control their oil interests.

In such circumstances of strategic world those are a lot of third world countries now also are emerging as a regional super powers among them Iran, Iraq & India are much more suspected for becoming as a super power in Arabian sea region.

In the context of the current crisis in Gulf region, Pakistan will manipulate to enhance its geopolitical position.
If after the fall of shoh of Iran and the saur revolution in Afghanistan, Pakistan become a key factor in geopolitical strategy of the U.S., the American interest in Pakistan now have assumed new dimension.

What is of for reaching significance to India's security environment is that Pakistan has already sent its commando forces to Saudi Arabia. That again need not lead to over-reaction because a large number of the Arab countries in the present Gulf crisis are backing Saudi Arabia. The crux of the matter is that Pakistan perhaps will emerge as a key link in the possible formulation of a long term plan for the security of Saudi Arabia and smaller Gulf countries. Pakistan Army is the only well trained Armed force East of the Gulf that the U.S. could rely.

Quite apart from this fact Pakistan's 800 kms long coastline on the northern shores of the Gulf gives it a strategic leverage. That also partially explains why Mrs. Benazir Bhutto has to be demolished to make Sindh, safe for any strategic operation.

Looking back, soon after the Afghan revolution, American perception about Pakistan's role in this region changed, giving it a higher priority in the American geopolitical strategy than any other country. Not even Iran under the Shah recived this importance. Against this background a report was prepared to the security of Pakistan by U.S. in 1980. Pakistan was assigned a vital role in the overall U.S. strategy for the Arabian sea
region and the Gulf. Advocating a close security relationship between the U.S. and Pakistan, report counted the advantages that such relationship would secure for the U.S. Besides averting the negative consequences of a Pakistan within the Soviet Orbit and restablishing U.S. credibility and enhancing its prestige, the report discussed three more major advantages. The first was: 'The U.S. is currently building a Rapid Development Force (RDF) to protect Western Access to oil-Pakistan could serve as an extremely important entremet for an RDF moving into the Persian Gulf from the East i.e. from Diego Garcia or the Philippines."

In its quest for dominating the straits of Hormuz, the RDF lacked facilities in the northern flank of Arabian sea even after it had acquired a chain of military bases in Egypt, Somalia, Kenya, Diego Garcia and Oman. The loss of access to Chah Bahar (Iran) naval port could be compensated by Karachi and Gwadar ports, in entire the Arabian sea. Such way Pakistan has taken place strategic key point for South Asia and West Asia. Along with Arabian sea area has converted into junction of all the strategic & military activities in this region which can play a discissive role for India's western flank security.

After the Analysis of Arabian sea in India's security, geopolitically, we have reached at the conclusion that the role of world power in the incidents of oil producing countries has been a very important factor. The increasing economic
potentialities of India like oil, gas, energy, fisheries. Trade with West Asian countries as well as employment of Indians in West Asia are basic factors. Thus this sea had been cultural bridge between Indian sub-continent and Arabian Peninsula. The Europeans had exploited this sea economically, politically and strategically nearly three countries. Now Arabian sea area has taken place of international importance due to Persian Gulf countries massive oil reserves. Europe and Japan are fully dependent on this oil. In coming future America will also depend on this oil, on account of that America has made a very strong Naval blockade of these oil producing countries. In this Naval Blockade Arabian sea has converted into a very sensitive area. At present the annexation of Kuwait by Iraq and its blockade by UN & US forces has converted an explosive situation in the Arabian sea region.

Along with this area being very important for India economically & strategically has forced India to evaluate and to strengthen its naval power. The following efforts are much more decisive and helpful to face naval security problems in 1990s by the Indian Navy.

In fact, since the mid-1960s both the Soviet Union and the United States had begun taking an interest in the region while the United States had a presence in the area before 1967, the Soviets took advantage of the British withdrawal and began to move into the region. Yet Britain, in several respects like to France, took adequate steps both to safeguard their allies
and see that a vacuum was not created. Both made interim arrangements anticipating their departure. Though historically no nation except Britain had held sway over the area, their was a quick mobilization of opinion soon after the formation of the base at Diego Garcia was announced.

The 36 countries of the region began lobbying and mobilization opinion in the United Nations as it was felt to be the appropriate forum in which to discuss the matter. The littoral and hinterland states were correct in this approach.

They demanded the implication of the declaration of the whole Indian Ocean as a zone of Peace. Littoral and hinterland states security and consultations, and great powers and major maritime users of the Arabian sea and the ocean consultations. The United Nations on the Arabian sea and Ocean region question has made slow but consistent progress. The member states can not consider the question of the ocean in isolation and obviously questions of their own security arise. Most of the littoral states consequently have to fit in their own security and national needs to an overall framework which would isolate the region from the big powers. Several of the littoral and hinterland states have military treaties with one or more of the superpowers and this adds to the complexity of the problem. Littoral states wanted to halting further escalation and expansion of the military presence in the area. Littoral and hinterland states of the region do not want the Arabian sea to be a theatre of nuclear war. They also want limited Super Power
involvement in the region.

There is still ample scope for discussion to work out a common strategy in the Arabian sea among the littorals and the super powers.

Pollution of the sea is causing concern because the legendary immensity of the seas, which can with stand anything is dying. In fact, there is only one pollution i.e. of oil pollution in the sea became waste has been running into the sea since time immemorial. Now some very precise measurements have been made in several areas but they are not sufficient to control the pollution. Modernization and industrialization of the society and the nations are also its main factors.

The U.S. is determined to pursue its foreign policy objectives as a global power and the Diego Garcia base expansion must be seen in this context. The U.S. has acquired base facilities at masirah (Oman), Gwader and Karachi (Pak.) & Hodeida (North Yemen) besides Diego Garcia which commands the North-western approaches to the Indian Ocean. The U.S. has sent task forces in the sea off and on time to time. Pakistan is a key element in the U.S. military strategy. Indian public opinion always showed concern about the military build-up close to India's shores. As a shipping nation and a developing country with a vast coastline, India attaches a special importance to the sea and the off-shore Indian islands. India condemn the Anglo-American move comparing it with a dagger pointed at
India's threat. Iran has already denounced Super Powers efforts for forming naval task forces with its European allies for safeguarding the western interests in the Gulf and the sea.

The strategic importance of the Arabian sea in the present day world is indisputable. Its significance to the littoral states is much more today than what it was a few years back. A number of factors have contributed to bring about this change the crosion of the power of U.K., the rise of Japan and China, the frequent closer of the Suez and military tension in the region. Naval strategist A. Mahan said that in the 21st century the destiny of the world will be decided on its waters. Every big power now interested in expanding her sphere of influence in this region. Arabian sea is rapidly going way of the all continents.

The military and naval presence of the big powers in the Arabian sea region is a subject of wariness to the surrounding states. It was natural that the U.S. naval activities in this region should have dragged the Soviet Union also into this area. The geography of the Arabian sea is such that it can be used as an offensive deployment area for nuclear missile submarines by U.S. because U.S.S.R. is on its north, but the Soviet Union has important non-military maritime interests in the Arabian sea. Arabian sea is a particularly remote and vulnerable place for the Soviet Union naval ships. Moreover the western powers control most of the agress and ingress points
to the Arabian sea and therefore the possibility of wartime reinforcement for the Soviet ships in the Arabian sea is extremely slender. Simultaneously the Suez canal and Persian Gulf ways become highly vulnerable in times of conflict. There is no certainty of a friendly attitude of all the coastal countries of the Arabian sea in the event of an armed conflict. But the littoral and hinterland states believe that they have suffered for centuries under the yoke of colonialism and they are fully aware of the necessity to safeguard their hard-won independence. They wish to pursue the path of all round economic developments. It is imperative for them to live in conditions which do not in any way impair their security and which can enable them to pursue their peaceful objectives. This was the rational of their proposal to declare the whole ocean a zone of peace. The littoral states of the Arabian sea do not have navies of any consequence. The naval power struggle in the Arabian sea has already started and it is likely to gain momentum in the near future. Disputes between the regional countries which otherwise could be settled on the principle of bilateralism and mutual accommodation would be exploited by the external powers holding bases in the region for their own purposes. Littoral states are largely dependent for their naval development on the big powers. India's active role in the neighbourhood would certainly be resented by China and Pakistan but many other countries of the region would take kindly.
In order to maintain a strategic security balance in the Arabian sea region, the big powers are likely to strengthen their forces in the region. Because of the uncertainty of the situations in the area, the big powers intend to remain prepared to meet each other's challenge in Arabian sea region. The entry of France & Britain into the area and the complex interests of China, Japan and others would further complicate the situation in the region. Japan actually was able to achieve the status of an independent naval power designing and building her own ships. In modern times no country can be a great naval power unless its science of nautical engineering is of the highest standards and industrial potential is not large enough. It is also necessary that the nation has to possess extensive skill in shipbuilding and must be a people devoted to overseas trade.

It is suggested that the future defence of Arabian sea will fall on India and the object of navy would be to secure and control of the sea lanes and prevention of the enemy in Arabian sea area. For this purpose the creation of a well-balanced task force is an objective.

A separate ministry of the navy can not long be postponed. The tradition of Delhi has so long been exclusively of land forces that to entrust the development of the navy to a defence minister is to ensure its subordination to army interests. A separate portfolio has to be created which alone would secure continuous attention to naval problems in all their
aspects and create in the minds of political leaders an adequate sense of the importance of naval development and also help to integrate all the factors necessary for the growth of a strong navy.

The creation of wide public interest and pride in the navy is also essential. The teaching of naval history in schools, the creation of interest in overseas communities, the popularisation of the navy and its achievements and all methods of organisation and propaganda by which it can be brought home to the general public that the security of their freedom is bound up with the sea have to be consciously undertaken to restore the balance of our thinking. A navy league to keep the needs of the navy constantly before the public, the use of communication medias to popularise the naval activities in the past are important for the purpose of the creation of popular enthusiasm in maritime developments. Many countries of the region in different times have felt the need to develop a strong naval power. If they desire to be a strong naval power it is not sufficient to create a navy; however efficient and well manned. They must create a naval tradition and awakening about naval activities and also importance of the sea in the public, a sustained interest in sea problems and a conviction that region’s future greatness lies on the sea.

Waters ways are most important for national and international transportation and trade, because there are no need of road construction and the flexibility, minimum cost and heavy
load bearing capacity and less fuel consumption characteristics are to be presented there. In modern atomic warfare sea transportation being enough secure in comparison to land and Air has become more effective and important for sea trade.

In the surrounding of Arabian sea there are mostly developing countries and important water ways are passing through this region. Most of the trade of these littorals is depended on the sea routes. From very early period India's relation was with the many countries of Arabian sea region due to sea navigation and maritime activities through sea routes of this area. Indian civilisation had reached in extreme and become popular because of the Indian naval strength and affected the other civilisation of this area. These sea routes have become help ful time to time in establishing colonies of external powers in Arabian sea area. India has remained main sea power till 3000 years, but has lost this gradually and control of this area is today also in rival position.

There is, no doubt, that many nations, both from within and outside the Arabian sea region, have important interests in the sea as a high way of international trade resulting in the necessity of ensuring the security of the sea lanes; also the region has acquired great strategic importance. None of these nations is, however, more vitally interested than India is in this sea. 5 countries like Iran, Iraq, Yemen, India and Pakistan are exclusively dependent on the Arabian sea while some others (Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Saudi
Arabia, Qatar & Egypt etc.) have their shores on Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf is a naturally protected area and has near and easy access to the Mediterranean sea through the Red Sea. Out of five countries, India has the longest shore being washed by the Arabian sea. More than half the population living in the shores of this sea. These countries interests are directly affected if any social or economic changes are forced on that population. Iran-Iraq war and Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in the year of 1978-79 are a fresh example of these countries concern about the happenings in these Islamic countries. Almost all the littoral states have undergone the pangs of colonisation; India led them in the historic struggle for achieving independence and would not like the re-imposition of colonial rule over any of them. The influence of the Arabian sea is far greater for the security of the region than for any other littoral country in the region. Other littoral countries due to their own domestic problems and size, are not in a position to meet the challenges of the great powers in the sea. In view of its dominant position in the region, India is the only country which may be able to bring together other nations in an effort to counter the super powers. The danger to peace in its immediate neighbourhood and also to the world peace have been the cause of increasing concern to India. Arabian sea has therefore, assumed a vital importance for India.

In the past, the western powers, which established control over the Arabian sea, had dominated and colonised many littoral states of the sea and India was one of those victims.
India has every reason to be concerned about the intrusion by other powers navies into the sea. India categorically rejected the vacuum theory with others propagated by the British announcement of withdrawal from East of Suez, the theory under whose cover the US started establishing herself firmly in the Arabian sea and the Indian ocean with the help of her allies. India and the other littoral states like Iran have time and again reiterated that they want the Arabian sea area with Indian ocean area to be free from conflict and more particularly from any nuclear.

They are opposed to the extension of the great powers naval competition in the Arabian sea and the establishment of foreign bases there. India with other littorals has voiced strong opposition to the establishment of US and Soviet naval bases in the Arabian sea region as US naval base establishment in the Diego Garcia. India has no desire whatsoever of dominating the Arabian sea as Iran or of converting it into an Indian Lake, but must take all necessary and suitable steps to safeguard its own security from any aggression from the sea it is surrounded by in the west. They must, therefore, reduce the tension if not possible to completely eliminate, by keeping the big powers off the Arabian sea and at the same time strengthening their naval forces. There is no doubt that they overlook the Arabian sea as a sentinel.

The formation of US strategic consensus from Egypt to Pakistan is resulting in pumping of arms into Gulf states and
percentage of budget being allocated for defence thus diminishing their's ability to concentrate on urgently needed developments. In this stage the use of nuclear weapons in the region can not be ruled out. The littoral states of this region mostly have not to be prepared to suffer the consequences of nuclear fall-out and any nuclear weapons short-falls while flying over region of Arabian sea. The destruction of the Gulf oil-fields will stop oil supply of Europe and also super powers.

India with her supporters, which was primarily responsible for bringing up the idea of peace zone area on the UN agenda, has consistently opposed big powers enormous military presence in the Arabian sea and Indian ocean as it introduced new tensions and conflicts and constituted a threat to peace and stability of not only India but whole of the region and the world. So many times it was said and persuaded also through non-aligned dias that the reduction of the big powers military presences in the region of Arabian sea as well as of Indian ocean, as the major tasks before the movement, is necessary for peace and stability and developments. In other words, to curbing the cold war by demanding that the great powers should reduce their military presences in the Arabian sea and other parts. On 9 April 1981, Mrs. Indira Gandhi then P.M., told the Lok Sabha that the focus of cold war had shifted from Europe to the Arabian sea littoral pointing out that South-West Asia flank had become flash point for India and the region of
Arabian sea also. In her inaugural address of the 7th Non-aligned summit on 7 March, 1983, Mrs Gandhi spoke strongly against the intensive militarisation of the Indian ocean and the nuclearisation of the Diego Garcia base and some Arabian sea and Persian Gulf area bases and asked the non-aligned nations to redouble their efforts to ensure that the UN conference on the Indian Ocean and the sensitive region of Arabian sea specially was convened at the earliest.

The concept of peace zone in the Indian Ocean and peace area in the Arabian Minimak sea has a special significance. Rich in mineral resources, the most popular trade route of the world, the Arabian sea region is inhabited by a large number of under-developed nations of the world. Arabian sea also provides ideal environment for the navigation. Its geo-political situation accords suitable basis for the external powers, specially the great powers, to control the land from sea. Moreover, the Socio-economic backwardness and the political instability, the scientific and technological lag, the defence weakness create an impression among the super powers about the power vacuum in the region. The recent manipulative activities of the super powers in the Arabian sea and the erruption of regional conflicts have created a heightened awareness for establishing permanent peace in the region. Weak, disunited and backward as they are, the regional states have evolved the concept of peace zone through a proposal to build up a collective opposition to the external military build-up in the
Arabian sea area. This proposal was accepted and adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16th Dec. 1971.

The success of the concept of free zone has been a controversial issue in the national and international forum of the world. In the present study, I have tried to ascertain the situations leading to the adoption of the concept its nature, viability and scope, short comings and limitations.

The freedom of the littoral states of Arabian sea depended upon the freedom of sea itself. The past and current development in the area establish that these countries, security, lies on the Arabian sea freedom at the mercy of any country capable of controlling the sea. Asian countries could continue to maintain the monopoly while the sea would remained free from the super powers interventions. Diversity in this national character and interests in the Arabian sea region, making political stability of the regional countries vulnerable, should be overthrown by the regional littoral states. The opposition of big powers in this area should be collective for the purpose of establishing it as a free area from the super powers intervention. The internal political unrest and poverty of the regional countries with lacking capability to face the external challenges also endeavor the external powers exercises in this area. The prosperous future of this region from many points of view attracted the eyes of big powers to establish their hegemony in the Arabian sea region with the aim of either increasing their respective areas of influence or improve...
their maritime strength to achieve a balance of power. The military presence has been found as a major instrument for the realization of these aims as it offers strategically suitable places for the development of second strike capability to the big powers, especially the western powers. The multiple interests of the external powers and the divergence of regional political aspirations tend to convert the Arabian sea into an area of multiple rivalries. This is an area of strategic importance possessing the potential to bring about major shifts in the global power structure, therefore it should be free from external power politics for regional countries' developments or economic progress.

The military presence of big powers in the region causes considerable and continuous strain both economically and politically on the regional nations. It perpetuates arms race and encourages regional disputes amongst the nations. The regional countries can pressure the outside powers to leave the region and can prohibit them to take advantage of minor local mutual disputes, in other words, there should be performed regional unity to evacuate the sea free from outside powers.

The Arabian sea should be free for protecting regional peace and safeguarding of their respective national interests in this area and the aim of demilitarization of the sea can be achieved. The free sea area can support the lessening of tensions, elimination of foreign military pressure and cooperation among the nations. The preservation of their independence,
sovereignty and territorial integrity and resolving of their political, economic and social problems depended upon the free Arabian sea from super powers rivalries.

The stability and security in the area is a necessary prerequisite for the effective development by the littoral states of their national resources towards the solution of urgent problems of development. There is an earnest wish of the Arabian sea countries for the establishment of free area. Thus the concept of free Arabian sea will provide to the littoral states of Arabian sea, preservation of Independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, elimination of bases, relaxation of tension, reduction in threat, elimination of the big power confrontations, assurance of peaceful passage for all, a system of collective security, without military alliances, and peaceful development and progress.

It is of paramount importance to all the littorals of Arabian sea that the sea remains free from military contests. The interaction of the rivalries of the external powers or disputes among the littoral states has always resulted in the establishment of colonialism of the people of the region and therefore, no wonder that there is an extreme sensitivity among the littoral states regarding the great power rivalries and rival naval deployment. The arms race will adversely effect the sovereignty of whole of the region. Military bases of outside powers will create tension and great power rivalry.
The nations of the region are still struggling hard to consolidate their newly won freedom and a sense of insecurity and instability arising out of the military pressures of the western imperialist powers in the region was bound to affect the process of socio-economic transformation. Peace zone concept aims at keeping the area free from great power rivalries and confrontations. The fear is that any large scale and loud presence of the navy of external powers is bound to create problems for littoral countries, the overwhelming majority of which are desirous of keeping the Arabian sea as a area of tranquility. They also demanded this area should be nuclear free area. Arabian sea which is of potential tensions, is kept free of great powers. It is at the same necessary to back their efforts by strengthening their defence over their territories, maritime movements and other installations by making their navies adequately strong.

There is only one western fleet in the Indian Navy at western coastal territory based at Bombay. But this fleet is being developed into balanced entities with the necessary number of the various types of vessels. But current developments indicate the need for a third fleet, based at Cochin to reinforcement of one fleet by the other in short time at the long distant western sea front in viewpoint of increased naval activities in area of this tense Arabian sea of other powers of the world. Upto 1971, Indian maritime strategic thinking was largely focussed on the North Arabian sea. There is already considerable
foreign activity within this area. Foreign warships can be sighted, replenishing and patrolling and foreign aircrafts have been frequently spotted in the air. At present we have proper patrol of this area and foreign activity can be noticed timely. Outside powers who are largely interested in gaining superiority in this area are exploiting it. Therefore, it is essential to know what is going on in waters under our jurisdiction or in areas significant to our maritime interests.

A study of our maritime history reveals that the peninsular character of our country gives the Arabian sea a preponderant influence on its destiny. The Economic life of India was and will always be dependent on the power that controls the Arabian sea. With an open coastline of over  
km, western coast of India can not be safe if the Arabian sea is unprotected.

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 today gunboat diplomacy is active. As far as Indian mis concerned, her peace strategy would be a continuation of her earlier policy with certain modifications to suit the changing times.
Naval cooperation with friendly Arabian Asian Countries in this area, a welcome feature in the last two decades, should be encouraged by mutual assistance training programmes, visits to each others ports and the many ways in which such contacts generate and keep alive lasting associations. The value of good will visits to other foreign countries should also be given due attention, with the stress of voice on the use of modern vessels for the purpose.

The Navy must be developed and trained in peace-time to present the necessary deterrence to any potential aggressor in the area. It may be used in support of coast-guard operations, when the occasion demands, and for situation where a naval presence is necessary to ensure that our sovereignty is respected and illegal exploitation of our sea resources do not take place.

On the political plane, every effort has to be made to erase the territorial and jurisdictional causes that lead to tension and confrontation at sea between neighbouring countries our maritime boundaries should be demarcated by mutual agreement with our neighbours. It is necessary to support all attempts to secure international agreement on the laws of the sea. This is the only way to avoid maritime chaos, and to secure the freedom of navigation and a just distribution of the wealth of the seas. The strategy for our shipping development has already been outlined. It must pursue the twin goals of self-reliance and international equity.
Planning for naval development must take into account what is to be safeguarded and how best to defend our maritime interests. That we should build up a balanced naval force comprising the various elements of maritime defence is a foregone conclusion. The spectrum sea-going-forces, three dimensional in character, constituting the main strike forces with a provision for various escort commitments;

- coastal defence forces, required to sanitise an area roughly extending to the limits of our exclusive economic zones;
- harbour defence forces, to protect vital ports & harbours;
- logistic support forces, to replenish the front line forces at sea;
- amphibious forces, for the defence of our outlying territories and other amphibious tasks; and

The air elements that should be integrated with the above forces, as required.

Naval forces must include sea control vessels with the tactical air elements, command and control vessels and ships of frigate/destroyer type. Their grouping has to be flexible and tailored to suit each mission. They must work closely with shore-based reconnaissance and anti-submarine aircraft and be equipped with modern communications and weapons such as missiles of various types. Escort vessels are often necessary for the logistic support forces as well as for vital trade protection.
General purpose ships, such as frigates, lend themselves to this task as well. The endurance level of sea-going forces has to be high and this affects their size. Submarines are classified under sea-going-forces, but their missions are normally independent of strike and escort forces.

Coastal forces, required to protect our offshore installations and coastal trade as well as provide defence in depth to our coastline, consists of vessels smaller than frigates or destroyer, with less endurance power (since they operate relatively close to the shore) but with all-round fighting capability. Corvettes are normally used for this purpose and they work in close liaison with the shore-based air search and strike forces.

Harbour defence forces include minesweepers and minehunters to keep the approaches to the ports and harbours free of mines, seaward defence boats to counter infiltration and clandestine attacks by small boats and midget submarines, and missileboats for defence against surface attack. Air defence of the ports is separately catered the vessels used in harbour for, be would work in cooperation with aircraft dedicated to sea tasks, such as helicopters used for anti-submarine ventures or minesweeping. The missile boats may be vessels with conventional hulls or, in future development makes it possible, hydrofoil or hover craft.

To keep the fleets at sea and obviate their constant return to harbour to take on fresh supplies of fuel, ammunition,
stores and victuals, all modern navies have logistic support ships, such as tankers and shore ships, which use underway replenishment techniques. These vessels have considerable endurance, but do not carry the sensors or weaponry for effective self-defence. They have therefore to be escorted.

Amphibious forces are required for the defence of our hundreds of outlying islands. Most of these islands do not have well-developed harbours with wharves and jetties; therefore, embarkation and disembarkation have to take place across the beaches. It is not possible to permanently garrison all these islands, mobile patrols and amphibious forces with beaching capacity are, therefore, necessary to ensure their proper protection. There amphibious forces with the capacity to carry army tanks, vehicles, guns and personnel and other supporting forces, need to be based, as far as possible, in these islands territories because of their distance from the mainland. The use of hovercraft for amphibious landings has been mooted and may soon become an integral part of amphibious forces.

Today, amphibious operations include the use of troop-carrying helicopters for vertical envelopment. These helicopters are carried in ships of the amphibious force. This is a capacity needing development and which is well within our reach.

The air element in naval operations ranges from tactical air in vessels such as the carrier, through shore-based aircraft, both fixed and rotary wing, to shipborne helicopters for anti
submarine, communications, logistic, and hydrographic work. The aerial surveillance of the sea is a critical aspect of maritime strategy. Aircraft, suitably equipped and in adequate numbers, have to be provided on our coasts and, where possible, in our outlying territories. We already have anti-submarine helicopters which can be used, not only aboard ships but from the shore as well, in the defence of harbours. Minesweeping helicopters may also operate from shorebases. The need to use aircraft for electronic warfare tasks should also be taken into account.

The determination of the right proportions of all the various forces is a matter of careful analysis and military management. Obviously, there will be many constraints, not the least being the availability of resources, which will inhibit and severely discipline any effort to provide the navy with its basic needs. But the acceptance of the principle of balanced forces is the cardinal issue.

During war, effective sea control is of paramount importance. We must command those areas of the sea that are vital to us and deny to the enemy those areas vital to him. This implies a bold strategy of wresting any initiative the aggressor may have gained and turning the tables on him. One type of firm retaliation is carrying the war into enemy territory by "attack at source". This was achieved, for example, in 1971 when India attacked Pakistan's major naval base and port, Karachi, from the sea and the air. This put the adversary on the defensive and
secured the initiative for our side. But 'attack at source', though effective, can be fraught with much hazard, and the risks, and gains have to be carefully calculated. One of its attractive possibilities is that it may catch enemy units before they can sally out and take protection in the Arabian sea area, where they become a problem to locate and a menace till they are found and neutralised. The mining of approaches to the enemy's harbours is one way of bottling up its naval units and strangling trade. Pakistan attempted this unsuccessfully in 1971, but it is a potent method of attack and we should not only be prepared against it but also be ready to adopt it ourselves.

But wars at sea are not won by attacks at source alone. The decisive battle is normally fought on the high seas where naval operations embody the search and attack on the opponents' surface warships and submarines as well as the seizure of his merchant ships. With the application of blockade, merchant vessels of other countries, carrying cargoes which can assist the enemy in his war efforts, can also be prevented from doing so. Some nations, such as Germany in the two W.Wars, have prowled the sea, in lone warships, to raid cargo ships outside the areas of blockade. This is not a war-winning strategy but a facet of trade warfare. Whatever the choice of method, it is certain that victory will elude a purely defensive strategy.

Offensive action requires the use of firm and secure bases as spring-boards for action. Thus, our base facilities, and the
coastal and local defence forces protecting them, are in integral and valuable part of the maritime operations scenario.

We have one major base on the west coast. The nature of maritime development in the Arabian sea indicates the need for a naval base in the southern border of sea also. It may not have elaborate repair and logistic organisations, but berthing, fuelling and other operating facilities should be provided.

As regards to the actual waging war, there are well-established principles which are taught in all important military institutions and have stood the test of time. Whilst these are universally applicable to war on land, sea and in the air, some of them need special emphasis in the maritime setting, with its peculiar spatial characteristics and the mobility of the forces involved. One is the concentration of force at the right time and place. It involves the best use of mobility, fire power, endurance, and a sense of timing. It does not necessarily mean the gigantic massing of forces, but rather the judicious use of such strength as will, by the clever exploitation of various factors, to achieve success. It does entail the prompt seizure of opportunities or the creation of situations that bring about the desired results.

Surprise is another guiding principle of war. It catches the adversary offguard, often unnerving and demoralising him. It can be achieved by deception and diversion and several other
ways. In maritime warfare it is true that it is only politicians who imagine that ships are not earning their keep unless they are rushing madly about the sea. A decisive facet in maritime strategy is the amount of restriction placed on one's submarines. To prevent a submarine from attacking a vessel until it is definitely as hostile, is to place the submarine in a strait-jacket and increase her vulnerability, particularly in the modern environment. In undersea warfare, when submarine hunts submarine, this kind of restriction could be fatal. Modern development point at removing some of the traditional trammels & customs.

A important problem is that of the control of forces at sea, particularly in these days of efficient long-range communication facilities. How tight, how close should be the control of fleet movements at sea to the remote shore headquarters? It is generally preferable to indicate broad aims and intentions and provide all available intelligence to the commander at sea, leaving him to translate them into effective action.

Since we are in the nuclear age, we must deal with maritime strategy in this new setting. Today, there are tactical nuclear weapons and strategic nuclear weapons. The strategic nuclear weapons are designed primarily for attacks on the adversary’s main centres of military force, industry and even population. In this type of warfare, sea-based nuclear missiles, particularly those in submarines, would play a vital role. But this
types of war would be short. The use of tactical nuclear weapons at sea is a distinct possibility. Such weapons as nuclear depth Bombs and Torpedoes are in service today. Their use does not destroy large populations, yet they could be effective at sea. The radius of destruction of a nuclear depth bomb used against a submarine is so wide that errors in precise location are not as with conventional weapons.

As regards defence against unclear attack, warships, no more than any other targets, can not survive direct hits or near misses of nuclear ammunition. But the lethality of even nuclear weapons is finite, and dispersed formations of ships provide one simple method of reducing the impact of nuclear attack. Of course, dispersal reduces mutual support, and the most favourable plan is one that achieves a balance between conflicting options.

At present all modern warships are so built as to be able to steam through a nuclear-contaminated area, when the need arises. They have monitoring devices and methods of excluding contaminated air from being absorbed during the time spent in the fall-out area. Also, simple method of washing away the fall-out are available.

In general, maritime strategy has to be flexible in seeking to exploit an environment characterised by a fluidity of situations and the lack of frontiers and geographical impediments.
and affected by the possible involvement of neutrals in battle zones, and the fact that all participating units are mobile. Once a conflict is unavoidable, bold offensive strategy is the best form of defence.

A nation's maritime strategy has to be translated into naval force levels, and the gravest error in this exercise is to base them on mere ship-for-ship comparisons with the navies of potential or likely aggressors. This is well expressed in the military balance.¹

To compare the maritime strengths of both sides, particularly on a regional basis, offers difficulties. Naval power is highly flexible, ships move between fleets, fleets move over great distances, strategic and tactical functions are often speedily interchangeable. It is far from easy and often inappropriate to set ships off against each other numerically. The requirement for destroyers is not related to the number of enemy destroyers but to the need to maintain a presence and to escort surface vessels against submarine or air threat; in anti-submarine and maritime aircraft operate as combined teams.

In present time, with the introduction of underwater and air elements, the assessment of naval strengths differs from the yardsticks used earlier in this century. It would be of little

avail to compare the number of submarines we own with that of a potential aggressor. It is more relevant to see the threats his submarines pose to our maritime assets and what we need to counter them.

In 1971, we had to deploy a substantial part of our fleet in the west, even after Pakistan's submarine Ghazi was sunk, in order to exercise sea control, by cutting off the enemy's lines of sea communications and attacking his ports and airfields. Thus, the three dimensional nature of sea warfare must condition every move. Tasks and missions must be the key consideration.

Maritime assets and liabilities must be studied to determine force levels wisely. A large number of ports and harbours is an asset, since the closure of one or two still leaves the rest open for vital trade. But this same asset is a liability since it multiplies the number of ports to be defended. Our offshore islands are of strategic value, providing us with defence in depth, but defending them imposes commitments on our part and necessitates appropriate force levels. Our large shipping fleet is a distinct advantage, though the increased numbers to be protected means heavier defence commitments. Even one submarine at large in the sea threatens a large number of vessels. Another important consideration is that, in confrontations at sea, the parties do not necessarily have to be neighbours with common land frontiers.
In the case of a stalemate in an overland battle, the
initiatives may well be beyond the land frontiers and rest with
the seas. Sea communications, particularly for countries that
can not afford large stockpiles, would be vital in such circum-
stances. This is why it is ill-advised to dismiss the defence
of trade as unnecessary in future wars. We can not protect it
everywhere, but we must be able to ensure it flow in vital areas
and at crucial times.

In assessing the needs served by our naval forces, a
modicum of imagination is necessary and the tendency to wish
away possible awkward situations must be eschewed. National
strategy and maritime strategy are the concern of the highest
powers in the country, but public discussion on them assists the
planners and helps the man in the street to understand the coun-
try's problems & policies. Thus, well-informed discussions in
the mass media, in centres of learning, and similar forums can
contribute to national decision-making in this important sphere
of national life and activity.

India must develop the maritime vision necessary to assert
her position as an important maritime nation and seek ways to
ensure the security of her maritime interests, which hold the key
to her future prosperity. For this purpose she will have to
develop sea power in the widest sense. In this context, the role
and importance of Navy can not but be emphasised.