CONCLUSION
The specific purpose of transportation is to fulfill a demand for mobility, since transportation can only exist if it moves people, freight and information around, otherwise it has no purpose. Any movement must thus consider its geographical setting which in turn is linked to spatial flows and their patterns. Urbanization, multinational corporations, the globalization of trade and the international division of labour are all forces, shaping and taking advantage of transportation at different levels. Consequently, the fundamental purpose of transport is geographic in nature, because it facilitates movements between different locations. Transport thus plays a role in the structure and organization of space and territories, which may vary according to the level of development. In the 19th century, the purpose of the emerging modern forms of transportation, mainly railways and maritime shipping, was to expand coverage, and create and consolidate national markets. In the 20th century, the objective shifted to prioritize transport modes, increasing the capacity of existing networks and responding to the mobility needs and this at a scale which was increasingly global. In the 21st century, transport networks focused to cope with a globally oriented economic system in a timely and cost effective way, and to do away with the problems of congestion and capacity constraints.

The evolution of transport has always been linked to economic development. The transport sector is also an economic factor in the production of goods and services. It contributes to the value-added of economic activities, facilitates economies of scale, influences land value and the geographic specialization of regions. An important part of the spatial differentiation of the economy is related to where resources like raw materials, capital and people are located and how well they can be distributed. Transport routes are established to distribute resources between places where they are abundant and places where they are scarce, but only if the costs are lower than the benefits. Consequently, transportation has an important role to play in the conditions that affect global, national and regional economic entities. It is a strategic infrastructure that is so embedded in the socio-economic life of individuals, institutions and corporations that it is often invisible to the consumer, but always part of all economic and social functions. If transport is disrupted or ceases to operate, the consequences can be disastrous.
This study highlights the basic concepts like sea power, geopolitics, geostrategy and the evolution of maritime transport networks in context of maritime transportation of Japan. As already discussed, the concept of geopolitics initially gained attention through the work of Mackinder in England and his formulation of the Heartland Theory in 1904. Mackinder's doctrine of geopolitics involved concepts diametrically opposed to the notion of Alfred Thayer Mahan about the significance of navies in world conflict. His doctrine was influential during the World Wars and the Cold War, for Germany and U.S.S.R. as both of them made territorial strides toward the Heartland. Geostrategy, a subfield of geopolitics is a type of foreign policy guided principally by geographical factors as they inform, constrain, or affect political and military planning. Strategy is always linked with geography as Gray and Sloan state it, 'geography is the mother of all strategy'. Sealanes represent the arteries of global commerce that bring the fruits of globalization to all points of the globe's compass. As with all political theories, geostrategies are relevant principally to the context in which they were devised like the nationality of the strategist, the strength of his country's resources, the scope of his country's goals, the political geography of the time period, and the technological factors that affect military, political, economic, and cultural engagement. Geostrategy can function actively, advocating foreign policy based on geographic factors, analytical, describing how foreign policy is shaped by geography which can predict a country's future foreign policy decisions on the basis of geographic factors.

This study discusses the security issues of SLOCs particularly important for Japan. Japan is sufficiently concerned about its oil life-line to be safeguarding the sea-lanes up to 1,610 km from its territory. Such kind of safeguarding could in the future extend well into the South China Sea. Closure of Southeast Asia's strategic waterways for an extended period could seriously harm Asian economies with which the United States has important trading links. The United States worries that these chokepoints could be effectively closed even without being physically or militarily blockaded. For example, if the Spratly area were declared a war zone, shippers would be compelled by prohibitively high insurance rates to reroute their cargoes through the Sunda, Lombok or Makassar Straits at higher shipping costs. The worst case would be the closure of all four strategic
waterways as a result of regional conflict or a failure of international freedom-of-navigation conventions. Such an eventuality would require a detour of oil and other bulk shipments to a much longer route around the southern coast of Australia. Japan's dilemma is how to ensure such safety and security of navigation without appearing to be overly aggressive and selfish. The interests of the United States in keeping the sealanes safe and secure are more complex. Japan needs to be proactive and responsive to the concerns and sensitivities of the Straits States. Therefore, Japan should consider supporting one or more of the following arrangements. One proposal for a multilateral SLOC security regime would have the United States at its core and the Asian countries sharing responsibilities for areas and functions commensurate with their capabilities and locations. Under this scheme, the United States would be responsible for sealane control throughout the Pacific Ocean. In the different Asian sectors, this responsibility would fall to the concerned regional states. And surveillance of coastal waters and local shipping would be the responsibility of littoral states.

Already in Northeast Asia, a web of bilateral arrangements is being spun. INCSEA agreements exist between the United States and Russia, the United States and China, Japan and Russia, Japan and South Korea, and South Korea and Russia. South Korea has proposed joint maritime search and rescue to China as well as exchange of visits by naval ships; it has also proposed a joint naval exercise with Russia. Meanwhile, the United States has proposed that the U.S.-Malaysia joint military search and rescue training mission be expanded to include China and Japan. And even Japan and China have resumed their security dialogue and will exchange visits by warships, while Russia and North Korea have signed a new treaty on friendship and co-operation. In surveying the present state of the world's sea lanes and their significance in terms of security, whether national or global in scope, it is essential that one looks beyond statistics to understand why the sea lanes that traverse over two-thirds of our earth's surface is more than just about the ships and the cargoes that ply the sea lanes daily.

The growing complexities of economies and societies linked with technological changes force the transport industry to constant changes and this has lead to growing concerns on
environmental impacts. There is a trend in the expansion of merchant fleets with bigger and bigger ships. These ships are in demand to achieve greater rates of return per voyage. As ships get bigger in size, there are fewer ports that are capable of offloading them. World commerce depends on hub ports; there are larger ships offload their cargoes for further transshipment by smaller vessels. Globally, these hub ports are very few in number; they require infrastructural assessments for activation. Advancement in technology greatly improved the safety of the ships and crew. Shipbuilding industry has made progress in terms of ship design, propulsion, navigation, and habitability. Sea accidents are common due to poor seamanship and human error. Advancement in shipborne navigation equipment satellite communication and shore based vessel monitoring and control, collision at sea is a recurring phenomenon. Consequences of increased globalization and interdependence have changed the maritime future of any region, including a more evident concern for the security of shipping and seaborne trade. A move by China, Japan and Russia to use their navies and coast guards to extend their regional influence are also the effect of globalization. Investment in technologies is also considered as a possible option to enhance navigational safety and protect the maritime environment.

This study has taken note on Japan's maritime geography and economy and concluded that geographical location and physical distribution of natural resources is dominant no matter what kind of diversification of routes and other economic contingency measures are available, it could not altered Japan's geography. Globalization and industrialization have rather aggravated the process of trading but could not change or alter the strategic location. The structure of Japan's international seaborne trade has created a peculiar dependence on the south western SLOCs connecting Japan with Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Europe and above all on the Strait of Malacca which is known as the energy lifeline of Japan. To minimize the threat of SLOCs, it should focus more on policy fields including diplomacy, trade relations, industrial policy, energy policy and law enforcement. The last few years have witnessed both significant positive and negative developments in maritime confidence and security building in Asia. There seem to be several common factors encouraging the positive developments. Japan's antipiracy
initiatives derive from a common security interest in keeping the sealanes open and safe for commercial traffic. There is a growing concern regarding military and intelligence gathering activities in the Exclusive Economic Zones around China. China increased intelligence activities around Japan may also linked to U.S. leadership such as the enhanced U.S.-Japan security alliance. The development will have a profound effect on maritime confidence building, enhancing it between allies and deepening suspicion among the excluded or the opposed one. The convergence of proposals of China, South Korea and Russia for a multilateral security forum for North East Asia is very significant. Formation of a solid maritime regime is required to compromise with diverse fundamental national interests and high politics. It is a well known fact that where there is absence of strong relationships maritime incidents can easily and rapidly escalate tension and even result in conflict. Multilateral arrangements should address common maritime problems like search and rescue, environmental protection, drug trafficking and smuggling. There exist no one comprehensive institution or initiatives, multiple interests are present. The territorial questions in South China Sea area are directly linked to sealanes security which is indispensable for regional peace and stability.

The importance of shipping is increasing. Sea transport remains by far the cheapest way of moving goods and raw materials around the world, including the most important ones of oil and gas. The technological developments over the last decades or so have changed the demand for transport and related services. A major development has been containerization. The shipping industry is developing technologically. Japan is really a maritime nation, and now it has prospers much from the sea. The joint power of Japan and U.S. as regional power is one of the strongest in the world. Japan has already built its maritime self-defence force in collaboration with U.S. navy to enable to defend its coastlines. It can be concluded that though information technology and globalization has helped to make maritime transportation faster and smoother, it is not the end in itself. Geographical factors tend to play a major role in determining the mode of transportation and cheaper than it.