CHAPTER - I

NEW GLOBAL GEO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS : IMPACT ON

SOUTH ASIA
NEW GLOBAL GEO-POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: IMPACT ON SOUTH ASIA

There were a series of dramatic events in the world for the last few years which effected the global defence strategy and the security aspects of South Asia. In December 1991 the Soviet Union ceased to exist as a super-power and gave birth to new 15 sovereign republics, 11 of which are united in a loose confederation known as the Commonwealth of Independent States; 6 of them remained in the Asian territory of the former Soviet Union. The disintegration of the Soviet Union left the world without its geographically largest country and militarily one of the most powerful states. It left the people remaining in the successor states with a massive economic security and social problems, which the
reform attempts of Gorvachev were unable to repair.

'One of the most unexpected results of the demise of the Soviet Union has been the fact that the focus of Moscow's foreign policy concerns has swept to former republics of the Union itself. As Vladislav Zubok has argued that the 'filial ring' of the friendly republics around Russia has become the major source of potential confrontation. 'The enemy ring now lies within Russia itself; the filial and fraternal rings are anything but, filial or fraternal, and the encircling capitalist world is not so much hostile as indifferent to Russia's fate.'

The Bi-polar power structure with which the world lived for about 45 years, cause to an end quite suddenly in 1990. The collapse of the socialist system in the ex-USUR was an spectacular event. It transformed the whole nature of the global politics and dramatically altered the basic parameters in which the various relationships between nations, states and classes have hitherto operated. This is so far the relations between North-South, East-West, West-West, East-East, and South-South within imperialism, between imperialism and its victim*, between exploiting and exploited classes, between fractions of the dominant classes, between states and classes.

Gorbachev wrote early in 1987

'The 20th century (however) is unique. It has witnessed the range of new factors that compel us to perceive differently the affect that the decisions taken by individual governments would have on the future civilization between the extension of our knowledge and the way we use it and time and space themselves. Power politics that does not go beyond the use of gun


power is one thing and power politics, based on a potential capable of making myth about the world's end comes true in a matter of minutes is quite another to say, it is one thing when a handful of workshop emit smoke into air, and quite another when we have overall air pollution threatening the world with all ecological disaster. Life itself demands that each national economy and the world economy as a whole be re-constructed whether we like it or not.

The coup of 19 August and its collapse two days later ended the process of Socialist oriented perestroika begun in March 1985 when Mikhail Gorbachev succeeded to the General Secretaryship of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) following the death of Konstantin Chernenko. Gorbachev suffered the same fate of the other major reformist Soviet leaders like Nikela Khurchev who was disposed as General Secretary of the CPSU by his Politburo colleagues in October, 1965.

The Soviet threat of a concerted ideological and military challenge from militant communism to its non-communist and even weaker communist neighbours has disappeared. The Marxist concept of class struggle for the liquidation of exploitation of the toiling masses by privileged rich. So appealing to the improverished masses of Asia and Africa - proved to be the greatest hoax of the twentieth century, because class in equalities and class privileges of the upper crust in the former Soviet Union were

greater than in most other societies.¹

(a) The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty

The Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty was agreed in 1990 and was a major development in the terms between the two super power, USSR and USA. The treaty was a significant event in the history on which the past and the future of the global dynamics may depend. It was the first time that the USSR agreed to compromise regarding space based weapons. The START sought to reduce the strategic offensive weapons to equal intermediate level, in a phase manner, over a period of seven years from the date of the signing of the final draft. The reduction during the first phase of the treaty, equal ceiling shall apply to both the Soviet Union and the United States regarding strategic offensive nuclear weapons. The treaty put a ceiling on the number of the strategic Nuclear Delivery Vehicles. It included the Inter Continental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), Long Range Submarine, Launched Cruise Missiles and their Launchers and heavy Bombers. Both the super powers agreed to it. The treaty further prescribed a limit for Sea Launched Cruise Missiles to 880 units for the Missiles with a range in excess of 660 km for armed SLCMs with a range of 300-600 Km.

The verification procedure was also prescribed under the START. The first aspect was to make available to each other, data regarding the systems included in

START before and after the reduction took place. Site verification and monitoring of the elimination process was also prescribed. A quick look at the meanings of limitation placed upon super powers by START.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pre START</th>
<th>START</th>
<th>Actual Warheads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>USSR</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy ICBMs</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>760</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALCM Bombers</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Bomber with 20 ALCM = 10 war heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USSR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 Bomber with 12 ALCM = 8 war heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICBMs</td>
<td>1800</td>
<td>2552</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>war heads only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>16000</td>
<td>15000</td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>current war heads only</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: US DOD, USSR MOD USIS.¹

The most significant aspect of the strategic Arms Reduction Treaty was that nuclear warheads in excess of Megation yield were to be reduced by an average of 76% over the current levels. However, all that the START adds up to is the fact that instead of being able to destroy the planet Earth three times over, the super powers minimized to destroy the planet one and a half times over.

After the cold war was declared to be over, following the Bush-Gorbachev Summit in December 1989, former Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe broke loose from Moscow’s hegemony and moved towards democracy. A great many disputes and tensions had been resolved in the world or at least deprived of their eminence, as a flash point. The world breaths easier, as a spectre of a global conflict involving nuclear or chemical weapons, recodes into the realm of the impossible. Defence budgets had been reduced as is also the case with armouries of nuclear and conventional weapons. In some areas, even a significant diversion of resources from warline to peaceful construction has been visible.¹

(b) Chemical Warheads

Another significant development of the increased cooperation between the United States of America and the Soviet Union, was the agreement on the reduction of chemical weapons. The agreement was based upon President George Bush initiative of Sept. 1989, which proposed that the United States and Soviet Union come forward to destroy their chemical weapons stock piles in order to put ban on nuclear weapons.

The bilateral agreement signed between George Bush and Gorbachev of the Soviet Union at the Washington Summit in May 1990 called for a number of significant steps. The first of which was the reduction of US stocks (over 25,000 agent tonnes) and the Soviet stock (over 40,000 agent tonnes) by 50% upto 1999. The destructions was to began with effect from 1992. It was also agreed that both super powers shall stop production of chemical weapons after the

¹ Bhatt, Maqbool Ahmed, strategic Balance In South Asia including the Indian Ocean, Published in Strategic Studies, Islamabad, Vol. XIV, No. 4, Summer, 1992.
agreement. Further, it was decided that the United States and the Soviet Union shall co-develop the environmentally sound means to destroy chemical weapons. The agreement for the destruction of the chemical weapons was designed to give an impetus towards a Global Chemical Weapons Ban Treaty. It was also decided that verification shall be monitored by both sides and will be aided by data made available. The treaty was the result of the confidence building measures adopted by the USA and the Soviet Union starting in late 1989.

Russia also pledged to stop long-range air- and sea-based Cruise Missiles. Russian Government halted production of Tu-160 ("Black Jack") and Tu-95MS ("Beer") bombers, and cut short its weapons purchases in 1992 by 70 percent. There had been a general cessation of activities of the former Soviet Pacific Navy out of its home waters.\(^1\)

(c) The MTCR

The Indo-Russian agreement on cryogenic engines and technology have been flushed down the drain in Washington. The rational apparently is the proliferation concerns of the USA for which Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) was created in April 1987 by the US and six of its allies, with the ostensible purpose of controlling the proliferation of nuclear capable missiles.

The purpose of the MTCR was to limit the risk of nuclear proliferation by controlling transfers that could make a contribution to nuclear weapon delivery system. The US has maintained that the Cryogenic Sale Violates the MTCR guidelines and hence the ban on ISRO since May 11, 1992 and the continuing pressure to have the contract cancelled.

---

The MTCR has become an important factor to India after the cancellation of the Cryogenic deal. The MTCR Guidelines are not intended to impede the objective of peaceful cooperation in space is exactly what the U.S. is doing through its sanctions against ISRO and follows on pressures. There is another fundamental point. The US had sought to justify the sanctions under the authority of its national laws - the key one in this case being Missile Technology Act of 1990 as part of the National Defence Authorisation Act FY 1990-91. The MTCR is neither a treaty nor an international regime.

There are also glaring inconsistencies in US policies on the subject. The MTCR came into force in 1987 but, the U.S. took no action when China supplied 30 launchers and over sixty KM range CSS-2 nuclear-capable missiles from the following year. China has transferred M-11 missiles and technologies to Pakistan as per official US sources. It had also supplied guidance units usable in M-11 missiles to Pakistan and Pakistan is developing 600 Km range Hatf M-9 missiles based on French technology.¹ The US imposed sanctions on China and Pakistan on June 23, 1991 under MTCR for two years. Sanctions against China were lifted in February 1992. Saudi Arabia even continues to upgrade its nuclear capable long-range ballistic missiles with Chinese assistance right under American noses without any penalty, but America is still adopting 'Special relations' with China. India is not the member of the MTCR and is not found to follow guidelines.

(d) US-Soviet Cooperation

The most significant field - Soviet-US has been to 'Aviation'. It was considered that some US Avionics manufacture may, in the near future began to supply the Soviets-equipment in order to enhance the capabilities of

¹ Singh, Jasjit, Rocket Deal, Hindustan Times, New Delhi, July 19, 1993.
MIG-29. The Soviet economy was opened to US companies and a number of them were looking towards this end. In the geopolitical field both USA and USSR came nearer to each other. Moscow used its leverage to pressurise the Cubans to withdraw from Angola and the Vietnamese from Cambodia. In August 1990 Moscow, joined the United kingdom, the United states of America, France and China in order to approve the UN Peace Plan to end the Cambodian Civil War. The Soviet and USA jointly pressurised the sandinistas Government in Nicaragua to allow free elections which resulted in the fall of Marxist government.

The most significant part of the cooperation between the two superpowers was the use of vetos in critical issues with wide consideration. The Cambodian civil war could be solved only due to this good gesture. This new found cooperation between the two super powers on the Geo-political area, led to the United Nations becoming the International Police-man, its founders wanted it to be. Another important development has been the United States Clark Field Air Base and four smaller American bases in the Philippines to the Manila authorities and the start of partition to terminate a century old United States military presence in the country by closing the Subic Bay Naval Base. For the United states,a Soviet Union without being able to control third world may not be of much use. In the past Soviets spoke in a monolithic command while US often babbled incoherently. This is not the case now. The non supply of Cryogenic Engine and cancelling the agreement by Russia for the supply to India apparently reflects the hight of cooperation between the two nations. However, it can not be suppressed that it is a well thought policy of USA to take use of the crisis and helplessness of the Soviet and aloof them from the Third World Contacts and pave the way for regional power play. However, until the Soviet economy recovers, it can hold
much future for Washington. The Soviets are now a long term prospect as a major market for consumer goods and an investment sector with low overheads.

(e) The Middle East

Despite the military victory of the coalition forces over Iraq, the ejection of the Iraq forces from Kuwait and its immediate environment, Saddam Hussain remained in power. However, his country spilted in three broad regions, with the Kurdish community concentrated in Northern Iraq, the Shites in Southern Iraq and the Sunni Muslims in the Centre. It is the latter who constitute the power base of Saddam Hussain. There are no chances of the removal of Saddam Hussain presently. The Saudi Arabians, Sunnis themselves, have no wish to see a strength ended and Shites presence on the northern border. A part from it Saudi Arabia, now even views high technology American bases as an embrassment, they wish to avoid. Kuwait on the other hand, being concerned with a possible resurgent Iraqi threat, prefers the guarantee of an effective western presence, which has given rise hostility from Arab Nations.

(f) The Arms Sale

The Gulf war has provided another grain warning that arms transfers are dangerous to the long term interest both of the buyer and seller states and are linked to the problem of proliferation. It has also provided further proof that transferring arms, to days 'friendly' nations may end in creating enemies that are far more expensive than any arms sales are worth. Iraq, which was once seen as a stabilising force against Iran, suddenly emerged as a major threat to western interests and as a threat which costed nearly $ 100 Bn dollars to defeat. The arms sales continue to involve
big business. They involve annual volumes of $30 Bn to $60 Bn in new agreements.\(^1\) Arms sales involve cyclical patterns. They rise and fall according to the pattern of conflicts in the Third World. The total Third World arms imports in constant dollars peaked in 1984 when they reached at the total of $50 Bn. Total imports then fluctuated between $44 Bn and $36 Bn a year during 85-88 than dropped sharply in 1989 to $30 Bn only.\(^2\)

In the Middle East 1989 was the first year after the end of the Iran-Iraq war, and Israil concentrated more on the Palestinian uprising than arms technology. Although Iraq imported $1.9 Bn worth of arms in 1989 and Iran 1.2 bn American dollars, their imports were lower than $8 bn imported in 1986. These countries imported exactly 20% of all arms transfers to the Third World. 1990 and 1991 was the end of cold war and scarcely the end of history for the arms trade. The Southern Gulf nations alone ordered in excess of 20 bn arms in 1990.

(g) Arms Export to Third World States

The arms sales is not only driven solely by the developed world. States like Brazil, North Korea and China have played a steadily more important role in exports to developing countries. China emerged as the world's largest fifth arms seller during 1980s and the increase in volume of Chinese sales is indicated by the fact that China sold $4.1 bn, worth of arms during 82-85, but $9.9 bn, during 1986-89 an increase in the sales by 138 per cent\(^3\) China has found arms

---


2. Ibid, P. CRS-40.

to be one of its few successful industrial exports, including missile technology, nuclear reactors and other weapons of mass destruction. India also made exports of 5 to 40 million and Pakistan 10 to 350 million dollars annually. After 1960, developing countries have consistently imported more arms than developed countries. Throughout 1980's, developing countries spent about 4 times as much on arms imports as developed states.

(h) NATO

A strategic review has been underway in NATO since its London Summit in 1990. The new NATO strategy was announced at a Summit in Rome in November 1991. However, this had already been pre-empied by the announcement of its conventional force structure and by President Bush's initiative in the drastic reduction of nuclear weapons. Moreover, NATO's new strategy will now be measured against a disintegrated Soviet Union following the abortive Coup in Moscow, infant democracies in Eastern Europe, which may be the component of any future European foreign policy.

(i) Disintegration of Yugoslavia

In September 1989 a number of constitutional amendments considered controversial were adopted by Slovenia which asserted republican sovereignty and by early July 1990, Slovenia moved towards full sovereignty. Its parliament decided that the federal constitution would only apply in Slovenia if it did not conflict with the republic.

Simultaneously, it proposed to develop its own foreign policy. It was difficult for Serbia to accept.

Slovenia and Croatia propounded confederalism. In Oct. 1990, they presented "Model of confederation in Yugoslavia". In 1991 the Yugoslavia's republics tried to negotiate the future of the country. The talks were destined to be dead locked as there were irreconcilable differences between Serbia, Slovenia and Croatia. The Serbs of Croatia held a referendum on "cultural autonomy" in August 1990 and endorsed it. By October 1990, they declared regional autonomy. Slovenia and Croatia also declared independence. Once, there were clashes hundreds of soldiers, mostly Slovenes and Croatians deserted the federal defence and joined republic arms forces. There was a war in Slovenia which only lasted for 12 days. The Croatian war was different. The fighting continued for months. The minority serbs in Croatia supported army and army refused to withdraw because of the safety problem of Serbs. Macedonia and Bosnia-Herzegovnia declared independence in Sept. 1991 and Dec. 1991 respectively. By April 1992 both the European Commission and US recognised Bosnia Herzegovinia as an independent state and became member of UN in May 1992. The conflict remained far from resolved.

The Yugoslav crisis coincided with the European community's march towards a united Europe and building supra-nations. During the cold war Yugoslavia was of strategic importance to US and USSR. There being no USSR

1. A Communist Constitution framed in Russia.
2. Yugoslavia's eight member collective federal presidency and Prime Minister Markovic and the six republican presidents underscored the authority of the republics themselves.
3. It is said that these moves were taken because serbs were remained by the atrocities committed by croats during world war II.
any more which caused a decline of the interest of super-
powers.

By disintegration of Yugoslavia, South Asia has
missed a strong supporter of the non-allignment and India
has lost its friend.

(j) German Reunification

The fall of Berlin wall was a remarkable event
which resounded throughout the world and put a new era
in history. No one ever thought it possible in such a short
period on October 3, 1990. The map of Europe, and Germany
underwent transformation for the third time around. Unlike
the times by gone, the event was of euphoria since there
was no fear of hostility and the world rejoined alongwith
Germany. German reunification was brought at a high cost.
The Soviets had to be compensated as they were dependent on
German goods. Trade obligations had to be fulfilled and so
the united states had to be placated.

The euphoria of reunification started to fade. The
scores of division in 1945 though have not yet been fully
healed, which is evident by the fact that German judiciary
is already overwhelmed by over a million litigation suits
demanding return of property to west Germans in East Germany
and the vice-versa. Unemployment has increased. Teachers
have been barred from their profession as have diplomats
and other workers due to lack of demand for eastern goods.
In the West the employment is increasing for the same
reasons. The armed forces have to be structured as has the
economy. The fixed cost of reunifications has gone 100
billion DM and more per annum.
The United Germany has withdrawn from the Warsaw Pact and as more states are thinking to withdraw from the part it is likely to cease early. Germany, however, has continued to remain in NATO. It is admitted that Germany will now allow foreign troops to base on their soil. The NATO will be too weak to act without Germany. The combined arms forces of East and West Germany outstrip those of any other single European Nation with the sole exception of the Soviet Union. However, the potential mix East and West Block Military hardware is a logistic night mare. It is therefore, logical that hundreds of MIGs, Sukhois, T-72, MBT's, a large number of helicopters and missiles will be placed on the International market with the result that the prices will fall down. Thus a new round of frantic arms purchase will begun in the third world.

Impact on India and Pakistan

India had extensive trade agreements with East Germany, against rupee payments. Germany has explicitly assured India that these agreements will be honoured. Militarily, Pakistan, is unlikely to receive US military assistance any longer and thus may also get benefit of the rock bottom prices and obtain warheads. It will raise arms race in South Asia. The very fact that the West German companies have in the past supplied Uranium, enrichment equipment for Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme. It is definite that now, Pakistan will receive East German weapons at will.

The unification of Germany has been welcomed in India. India not merely expected to build strong, mutually beneficial relationship with rich, powerful German state but, because Indians have always reached positively to the existence of a strong power on the continent of Europe as
a counter to British and the United States. India believe that the world of today is different from the world of 1939 and will be given more different in the years and decades to come. United Germany will be fully integrated in the European common market and hopefully in tomorrow's one European home. From the Indian point of view, Germany unification will emerge Europe more stronger and it will be a power centre to balance the United States and the Russia. It will make a stable Europe and a stable world.¹

(k) The Korean Unification

Unification of Korea has also been an important event after the fall of Soviet Union which implicates the change of attitude and sense of cooperation between the two super powers. The two divisions of Korea (South Korea and North Korea) not only impared the two but, had effected the security of the world at large and of the Asian pacific region in particular. The partition of Korea was marked as much by bloody Korean war as by intensification of super power rivalry. The unification was possible only due to end of the cold war between the super powers, collapse of the Soviet Union and the global set-back of the communist ideology which reduced the tensions in this region and strengthened the possibilities of unification of the two Koreas.

(ll) Cambodian Settlement and other Positive Development

The evolving peaceful settlement in Cambodia also contributes to the reduction of tensions in Asia. The approach deployment of 22000 United Nations peace keeping

soldiers in Cambodia will be a strong disincentive to the resumption of an armed struggle and will hopefully contribute to the full implementation of peace.

The chances of peaceful settlement in Afghanistan have increased as both Russia and the United States finally have stopped arms shipments to the warring parties. The only realistic option left for the conflicting parties is peaceful negotiation. The Pakistan government has also taken decision to stop all weapon supplies to the rebels waging war in Afghanistan. It has been reported that the Mujahedeen hard liners not to obstruct the United Nations plan of a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan.¹

A very positive development is the decision by the leadership of the Chinese People's Republic to further curtail the size of its armed forces by one million men - from three to two million.² China also decided to accede to the NPT and pledged to observe a 1987 pact - known as the Missile Technology Control Regime designed to limit the proliferation of missiles that can carry chemical or nuclear warheads.³

Japan, too is considering cuts in its defence forces in response to the end of the cold war and the reduction in United States and former Soviet military forces. Allegedly, these cuts in personnel and hardware were started in mid 1990s.⁴

There are some slightly encouraging developments in the India-Pakistan confrontation. On January 1, 1992 India and Pakistan exchanged lists of nuclear facilities under the agreement thus showing some degree of confidence in each others non-belligerence. It has also been reported that the Indian Government had offered to talk with United states on halting the spread of nuclear weapons in Asia.

The break up of the Soviet Union and the demise of the cold war are raising concerns, about volatile South Asia's military balance... reported Steve Coll of the Washington Post from New Delhi, "(T) he subcontinent is becoming active, if some what Shabby arms bazzar, where merchants from around the world peddle cold war, left overs, second grade equipment and spare parts to buyers short on cash but, eager to deal".2

Military Buildup in Indian Ocean

The Indian ocean enjoys a vital security threat perception in Asia pacific region. This linkage between the Indian ocean and the pacific is a post world war II phenomenon, and more particularly, after the decline of the traditional powers, like Britain, France and the rise of new great powers, like the USA and the USSR. Traditional powers, that had dominated the Indian ocean for centuries, were European powers and hence their line of communication
passed through the Mediterranean and the Atlantic. The new entrants were Pacific powers and their force projection in the Indian Ocean was directed from the Pacific. That was true, not only of the USSR but also the USA.¹

The world has seen a remarkable transformation of the international scene in the course of the last two years. After the Cold War was over, following the Bush-Gorbachev Summit in December 1989, former Soviet satellites in Eastern Europe, broke loose from Moscow's hegemony and moved towards democracy, including pluralism. Even more dramatic happenings in Soviet Union in August 1991 have seen, communism largely discredited as a political or economic model. A great many disputes and tensions have been resolved in different parts of the world, or at least deprived of their eminence as potential flashpoints whether in Asia, Africa or Latin America.

The Indian Ocean provides a link between Europe and the East. It provides a connection between the Western and Eastern spheres of Russia and a route between Europe and East Africa as well as with West Asia. These routes, therefore, connect regions both in the East-West and North-South directions. Including its bays, seas and gulfs, the Indian Ocean is 283 million sq. miles larger than either of the Atlantic Ocean. It encompasses 20.7% of the World's Sea area and 14% of the Earth's surface. The area consists of 36 littoral and 11 hinterland states making a total of 47 independent nations including 30% of the world's population.²

After the World War II, and specially during the last two decades, the geo-political importance of the Indian Ocean regions has increased immensely, as the littoral and hinterland countries have become liberated from the colonial yoke of the European rules and became

---


independent sovereign states. Decolonization, internal political upheaviles, liberation, struggles, interference by outside powers, regional unbalances and internal incompatibilities within the region have contributed to the evolution of a more complex and less orderly state system in this area.¹ The recent shift of centre of geo-political gravity and the super power rivalry into the Indian Ocean region has now assumed for confrontation as a Strategic Crossroad and as a future arena for confrontation between the super powers.² Truely speaking, it has only now entered the world stage in its own right, and its future is still very much in the making.³ The Indian ocean has now been turned into an arena of various overt and covert operations by aircraft carriers and spy ships.⁴ Cohen has identified the Indian Ocean area as the potential third Geo-strategic region in the world ⁵ and is vitally important to international security.⁶

The Indian Ocean region comprises 36 littoral and 9 hinterland states. It extends from 20° East to as far as 147° East longitude and from 60° South to the Arab and

2. Ibid., p. 215.
Indian land mass to the North. The economy of the Ocean states is primarily oriented towards the supply of raw material to the developed block. Japan purchases 90%, Australia 60%, France 70%, Europe 80% and the United States 26% of their oil requirements from the Indian Ocean States. 80% Gold, 50% tin, 77% of rubber also come from this area. ¹ Dr. Ross Babbage of Australia who was the head of Strategic Analysis in the office of National Assessment, stated that the Indian Ocean had considerable geo-political, economic and strategic significance not so much from what the region itself contained but also from the role that it played as the strategic and economic link with other regions in a broader global context. He elucidated that the combined GDPs in 1990 were $ 333 billion in South Asia, $ 264 billion in South East Asia; $ 350 billion in East Asia and $ 274 billion in Oceania. Nonetheless the intra-regional exports were 50.7 billion in South Asia, $ 27 billion in South East Asia; $ 141 billion in East Asia and $ 5 billion in Oceania. Indian Ocean was the super freeway with $ 1 billion of trade floating in the warm embayed waters which includes considerable military hardware and hence merited greater attention.²

The west is heavily dependent on Gulf oil for its industrial and cultural prosperity. The fact that the survival of the western economics is dependent on the assured and uninterrupted flow of Gulf Oil, was twice demonstrated during 1970s. The first was in 1973, when Arab members of OPEC imposed an embargo on the countries and many of them revised their stand on the question of Palestine to get embargo removed.³ King Faisal of Saudi Arabia attempted to

assert the sovereignty of oil producers in determining the production level and the price of oil. But, oil is not the only resource for which there is a scramble of big powers in the Indian Ocean region. In fact oil dependence has been highly publicized while the other reasons have been side track. USA imports cobalt, copper, corundum, and columbium form Zambia and Mozambique, suger from Mauritius, tea and cinnamon from Seychelles, tea, rubber and coconut product from Sri Lanka, palm oil from Malaysia, petroleum, rubber and tin from Indonesia for hundreds of millions of dollars and had to make export to this part of the world. The economic prosperity of the West thus depends on the free flow of trade and control over the Indian Ocean trade routes. The Western policy is to convert the former colonial dependency relationship to that of interdependency between the developed nations and developing nations. As a result of the laws of the Sea Conference, the world community now, have recognized as exclusive economic zone of 200 miles from the coast as that nations ocean space which is exclusively for that country to exploit for mineral wealth. This has given India an area of 2 million sq.km. of ocean space as our EEZ.

The northern part of the Indian Ocean had a thriving maritime traffic since ancient times. The periplus of the Erythrian sea, covering the East African Littoral, the Hadramaut, Persian and West coast of India was compiled by a Greek mariner sometime during the 3rd century after Chirst. It gave a wealth of information on the ports and hinterlands, approaches to harbours, the trade and customs to be paid and other nautical informations. Like the Pacific but unlike the Atlantic, the mid-Indian ocean's dotted with volcanic, and coral islands spreading right

across its width, from the east coast of Africa to the Bay of Bengal, between the tropics of cancer and capricorn. These islands are the focal points for their geo-strategic and geo-political importance for the ongoing power struggle in the Indian Ocean. The belt of islands from Comoros in the Mozambique Channel, the Seychelles, the Masederens, the Andaman and the Nicobars at the eastern end of the Bay of Bengal, stretches across the main trade routes of Europe, around the Cape of Good Hope, and to the far East through the straits of Malacca from the Persian Gulf.

In their search for a base in the Indian Ocean, the United States was impressed by the central location of Diego Garcia which seemed to be an ideal base free from political impediments. It was therefore decided, by Britain and the United States to permanently move the 1200 odd Diego Garcians from their homes to a place in Mauritius.

To constitute the new territory Britain detached from Seychelles group other island of Aldabra, Desroches and Farquhar and the changes. Archipelago then under Mauritius. The Americans choose Diego Garcia for several reasons. The decision was endorsed under an exchange of notes between the UK and USSA at the end of 1966. Later, when Seychelles gained independence on 30th June 1976, Aldabra Desroches, Farquhar were returned to the new Seychelles government. The Americans wanted to avoid future political problems, and by putting up the cost of transportation amounting to $650,000 to the Mauritian government, ultimately effected the transfer through the process, which took several years.

On 16th December 1971, General Assembly adopted, the resolution No. 2332, declaring the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. The resolution called for:

"The Great Power to enter into immediate consultation with the littoral states of the Indian Ocean with a view to (a) halting the further escalation and expansion of their military presence in the Indian Ocean and (b) eliminating from the Indian Ocean all bases,
military installations, logistical supply facilities, the disposition of nuclear weapons of mass destruction and any manifestation of Great power military presence in the Indian Ocean context of great power rivalry".1

It also called upon the littoral and hinterland states of the Indian ocean, permanent members of the security council and other maritime users of the Indian ocean to consult on the establishment of a system of Universal collective security in the region and to facilitate the implementation of the declaration. The security arrangements indicated in the declaration covered abroad range of subjects especially the proposal that warships and military aircrafts would not use the Indian ocean for any threat or use of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of any littoral or hinterland state of the Indian ocean.2 The pattern of inter-relationship among the regional powers and the great powers determine the fate of peace zone issue.3 The arms race between the great powers is persued globally with the conclusion of the Helsinki Final Act, the main focus of confrontation and the cold war has shifted from Central Europe of the developing world particularly the Indian Ocean.

Two great streams have characterised the Indian Ocean politics since 1950s. The competitive influence building by the external powers on the one hand, and nation building efforts by the littoral and hinterland countries of this region on the other hand. This came to the fore in the form of the policy of containment by the United States and the influence building into newly emerging nation


2. Ibid.

states pursued the policy of nonalignment, marked by a natural antipathy towards outsiders. The United States did not want to lose control over the ex-colonies of Britain as these contributed political, economic and strategic importance to it. Besides this, the Indian Ocean emerged as a part of the 'Global Strategy' after the Second World War to contain the expansion of communism in the Afro-Asian region. The United States conceived that the Indian Ocean has potentialities to bring major shifts in the global power balance.

Seriously, American strategic interest in the Indian Ocean began only in the 1960s. The main impetus was the technological development in nuclear weapon delivery - the emergence of the nuclear powered submarine capable of launching nuclear ballistic missiles. The development of SLEMs, not easily detectable by the adversary, gave a secure second strike capability to the US. The nuclear submarines also had a deterrent role against the Soviet Union by being deployed in the Indian Ocean region. While there is a controversy whether the US actually deployed these during the sixties in the Indian Ocean, a number of observers feel that the deployment did take place. Indian Ocean, thus, plays a significant role in strategic and space war scenarios. It is interesting to note the broad

---

parallelism in the chronology of the development of direct ascent HIT system against the background of US strategies and military development in the Indian Ocean. In 1978, the US Defence Secretary Brown said, "In the next five years we will be strengthening our forces in the region by the introduction of several advanced weapons systems: Trident nuclear missiles for our submarine fleet; cruise missiles for B52s, F-14 fighters for our carriers, F-15 for our air force squadrons; the aerial warning and control system and other improvement".

The US seems to have vital stakes in uninterpreted access to oil and passage on seas and waterways throughout the region primarily to limit Soviet power and influence in the region. The JCS describes the military postures of the United States in the Middle East, Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean as follows:

"The United States has a number of major interests in the region comprising the Middle East, the Persian Gulf, and the North-West Indian Ocean. These interests involve access by the US and its allies to the resources of the area, most notably to oil from the Persian Gulf states - to include protection of transportation routes for the flow of that oil to North America, Western Europe, and Japan, support for friendly regional governments against potentially hostile states and groups; limitation of Soviet power and influence throughout the region; and deterrence of direct Soviet military intervention".

1. Singh, Jasjit, "Indian Ocean in Global Strategies: Some perspective", in Akhtar Majeed, 'Indian Ocean: Conflict and Regional Cooperation, op. cit., p. 44.

For the containment of major strategic (nuclear) weapons in the Indian Ocean region, the interaction between the great powers and regional powers therefore developed on two levels - first dealt with the cold war and global nuclear strategy and second with regional interests of the great powers. Regarding the establishment of peace zone in the Indian Ocean, they did not respond positively. Soviet Union held that all continents, islands, oceans and sea (should) become total zone of peace, and suggested that it was difficult to achieve everything at the same time. The USSR favoured nuclear weapons - free zone for naval forces but the US disagreed on the question of total exclusion of all nuclear weapons. The US supported the General Assembly resolution for nuclear weapons free zones in South Asia, Middle East and Africa.

Like the nuclear weapons free zones in the regions of the Indian Ocean, mutual arms reduction among the regional powers and a built-in mechanism for ensuring peace and for conflict resolution were gradually added to the Indian ocean peace zone proposal. The acceptance of these proposals by the regional powers were made complementary for the Indian ocean peace zone proposal by the great powers. Since, India was the major motive force behind the proposal, these tools were used to present India as the main hurdle in the establishment of peace zone.

Pakistan took advantage of projecting her rivalry with India and thus called for acceptance of nuclear weapons free zone in South Asia, as well question of parity in conventional arms between India and Pakistan, conditional for Pakistan's support for the elimination of great power presence from the Indian ocean. In the specific context of the Indian Ocean, there is a possibility of Pakistan's integration in to the US RDF strategy. The former Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Thomas Moorer, has made a strong plea for US access to Pakistan facilities, particularly the Gwadar port and the Peshwar air base. Pakistan could serve as an "important entrepot for an RDF moving in to the Persian Gulf from the East." With the increasing security nexus between Pakistan and Gulf regimes, there is possibility of Pak armed forces serving as a US proxy force in the Gulf. Whether Pakistan would actually accept the US "kiss of death" by agreeing to serve as such a proxy is perhaps a debatable issue.

In this regard, Pakistan proposed in the United Nations to evolve a code of conduct regulating regional relations and balanced military strength among the states.

4. Ibid.
of the region.\textsuperscript{1} India considered it an obstacle in the establishment of Indian ocean peace zone as it is bound to create new controversies.\textsuperscript{2} Pakistan alongwith China raised the question at the meetings of Ad Hoc Committee of the United Nations in 1974 arguing that India's nuclear explosion has affected the peace and security of the whole region in the Indian Ocean.

South Asia's position in the Indian ocean, and its interaction with the outside interests, could be explained on the basis of intra-regional development.\textsuperscript{3} The nature of the relationship between India and Pakistan has determined by the relationship of the two supers because they have their own interests in the main local conflict of the region. The establishment linkages between the super powers and the regional consistants have been covered by the changing clouds of peace after the development of detente and relaxation of the tension between the two super powers at the global level and the emergence of another great power in the vicinity of South Asia.

Sri Lanka took initiative for the United Nations General Assembly resolution declaring the Indian ocean zone of Peace, got diverted from its basic concept.\textsuperscript{4} It called, after the nuclear explosion of India

\begin{itemize}
  \item[1.] Siddhu, K.S. The Indian Ocean : A Zone of Peace, op.cit., p. 85.
  \item[2.] Ibid., p. 85.
  \item[3.] D. Brawn, "Changes in South Asia Intra-regional and external Relations", in \textit{The World Today}, vol.34, No. 10, pp. 399-400.
\end{itemize}
for interlinking of nuclear weapons - free zone in the Indian Ocean region, which could be the first stage in the process of creating peace zone.\textsuperscript{1} Amersinghe expressed the view, "If a new nuclear weapon power were to emerge in the Indian Ocean region, the denuclearization and also the demilitarization of the area would be seriously jeopardized".\textsuperscript{2} The responsibility from inviting and sustaining the military, especially Naval rivalry in the region and the subsequent failure of peace efforts lies basically with the regional nations, as they provide opportunities to the great powers to interfere and magnify the regional conflicts into bigger wars.\textsuperscript{3}

India's ambition to rise to the position of the dominant power in its region arose from the perceptions of its leaders and scholars of the historical pre-eminence of the ancient times from South-East Asia to countries of Central Asia beyond the Himalayas. Having gained independence after nearly a thousand years of colonial bondage, India's sights are set on playing the role of a world class power commensurate with its size, population and past glory. Shortly after independence, the first Indian Ambassador to China, Sardar K.M. Pannikar emphasized the strategic position of the Indian Ocean and stressed the India's concern over it.\textsuperscript{4}

\begin{itemize}
\item[1.] U.N. Document, A/C, I/PV, 2089, November 17, 1975, p.36.
\end{itemize}
India's security can not be detached from the developments in the Indian Ocean. When the peace of Indian Ocean is disturbed India's security is disturbed. It will certainly have an impact on India's security. Security has various dimensions such as, security - from military threats, from politico-strategic threats, from threat to its economic interests and against psychological pressures.¹ The direct struggle and competition between the super powers relates to political, economic and military activities in the race for the right to impose one's will on the other.² The Indian ocean has predominant influence on the Indian destiny³ because, India has an open coastline of about 2,000 miles and over 90% of her foreign trade is sea-borne. Thus, who controls the Indian ocean will dominate her sea borne trade and independence.

That's why India continued to advocate for the Indian ocean as a zone of peace, according to the 1971 resolution. Y.B. Chavan stressed in the General Assembly that, "Priority attention should be given to mobilising the support of the international community for concrete and constructive action for implementing the declaration of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace by eliminating all military bases, conceived in the context of great power rivalry and reversing the present trend of escalating great power rivalry in the era".⁴

---

1. Chopra, Surendra, "Indian Ocean Politics - A challenge to India's diplomacy" in Akhtar Majeed (Ed) Indian Ocean : Conflict and Regional Cooperation, op.cit.p,83.
India has been vehemently opposed to the newly added proposals. India feels that these proposals are the pretexts to kill the objectives of peace and security in the Indian ocean. The adhering to the nuclear safeguards, will cause setback to her economic development. She wanted also to keep nuclear options open in view of the hostile nuclear power, China. The dispatch of the US naval task forces into the Indian ocean, at the time of Indo-Pak war over Bangladesh, in December 1971, and later during the 1973 Arab-Israeli war can be seen in the way that its presence is intended to provide support facilities for a more effective US role in the Indian Ocean. On the other hand, she has been soft regarding the USSR. She considered USSR more in the Indian ocean as reactive and defensive.

Further, Soviet Union has certain responsibilities under the Indo-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, peace and cooperation 1971. Soviet presence may be helpful to India in case of a threat to her, as happened in 1971. However, India can not ignore the effects of naval competition among super power as they, "fuel the regional conflicts and it might result in local wars by proxy". India, one of the states directly interested in the Indian Ocean, has been aware that without persuading the big powers, the idea can not be realised.

It desired, as other Indian Ocean states, the participation of those powers in the deliberations of the international conferences held for this purpose. The 1971 declaration was initially criticised by both western and eastern bloc nations. Only in the second half of the seventies the Soviet Union started to support the proposal. It was criticized on the basis that a group of states in a certain region could not establish a legal regime for the high seas in the region. It was argued that the extra regional naval presence in the Indian Ocean area was required, "in the interests of not only the security of the nations concerned but also of the states that rely on the stability created by a political and military balance". Oil embargo of 1973 provided the justification that the oil lanes had to be protected and access to oil fields should be secured. On October 4, 1977, President Carter of United States told the United Nations General Assembly that neither the United States nor the Soviet Union had a large military presence there, nor was there a rapidly mounting competition between these two nations. The United States stated that while it appreciated and shared many of the goals of the supporters of the declaration of the Indian ocean as a peace zone, it believed that such zones of peace could only come into effect through an agreement of all states concerned, wherever situated. It could not accept the proposition that a regional group of states could declare a legal regime for the seas to which other states without

2. Ibid.
their consent, nor could the General Assembly by itself take meaningful action to establish such a legal regime, beyond endorsing what might have been negotiated and agreed upon, among member states by consensus.

In 1979, the General Assembly by resolution 34/80 A and B, decided to convene the conference in 1981 at Colombo, Sri Lanka and to enlarge the Ad Hoc committee further, invited the permanent members of the Security Council and major maritime users of the Indian Ocean to serve on it and participate in its work, particularly in the preparation for the conference. The USSR abstained from voting on draft resolution while the United States abstained from both. The General Assembly adopted resolution 35/150 on December 12, 1980 included, "To make every effort, in consideration of the political and security climate in the Indian Ocean area, particularly recent developments as well as the progress made in the harmonization of views referred to in sub-paragraph (a), to finalize, in accordance with its normal methods of work, all preparations for the conference including the dates its convening". The United States questioned the validity of the existing concept of zone of peace and called for a change in mandate of the Ad Hoc committee. It pointed out that it had never accepted the 1971 declaration, as it regarded the Declaration as "faulty and outdated", as inconsistent charter to individual and collective self-defence, and difficult to reconcile with internationally recognized rights to freedom of navigation. It called that there was no harmonization of views on the basic issues in the Ad Hoc committee, and because of Soviet Union's refusal to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan, the climate of confidence needed for holding a

successful conference was lacking. The Soviet Union argued that United States was using the events in Afghanistan as a pretext to justify the introduction of its military, naval and airforces into the region. Facts made it clear that long before these events, the United States had broken off talks with the Soviet Union on the limitation of their military presence in the Indian Ocean, and had begun to create the base in Diego Garcia, bringing aircraft carriers and other ships into the Persian Gulf preparing plans for forming a rapid deployment interventionist force, and laying down a broadly based infrastructure for military bases.

In the veil of political conclusiveness, as an essential factor towards the implementation of the proposal the Indian Ocean states were asked to accept them at regional level. Some of the Indian Ocean states also appeared to make these factors conditional upon the acceptance of such zone as they feel danger from regional powers also. Viewing, this attitude of regional powers and the big powers especially the United States and the Soviet Union which wanted to enjoy the commanding position by using the pretexts one or the another, the prospects for the implementation of such zone in the Indian Ocean appear bleak.

The importance of Indian Ocean drew dramatically after August 2nd, 1992 invasion of Kuwait. The Rapid Deployment forces stationed at Diego Gracia formed the very first contingent of Troops to land in Saudi Arabia at their behest. The subsquent Embargo on Iraq ratified by the United Nations hit Indian Oil Supplies hard. The loss of Kuwait oil further intensified the crisis which was compounded by the fact that oil prices hit US dollars 35 a barrel.

---

1. Ibid, p. 314.
The increased military presence in Gulf was a major cause for worry. The Multinational Task Force remained is likely to remain in the reason for a long time. The more important aspect is the fact that Pan-Islamism is likely to rear its ugly head. The US policy of supplying hi-Tash armaments to what it deems as United Nations in the region are likely to cause many a sleepless nights to Indian strategists. It is likely that a significant proportion of these armaments are likely to find their way to India's Western Borders.¹

China Factor in Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean and Asian-Pacific region are expected to be the centre of gravity of economic and political activity of the twenty-first century world. Inspite of the relaxation in the frozen India-China relations, it is important to assess the nature and direction of their emerging naval rivalry, particularly in the Indian Ocean. India's power equation has to be seen in relation to China's because China is in a geo-strategic position which provides challenge to India as a regional power.²

Chinese naval modernization programme has been geared towards attaining a survivable retaliatory force. China had started the development of a full fledged blue-water navy to enable rapid deployment to the Western littoral of the Indian Ocean. China has 97 submarine as against 17 Indian, 137 of USA, T-372 of USSR, 32 of UK and 14 of Japan. It has 300000 personnel against India's 52000 and 53 principal

¹. Military Year Book, 1990-91, p. 86.
combatants against India's. The naval exercises that China has conducted during the past and around Spattly and Parcel islands and establishment of a permanent marine observation station in spattleys have a long term effect on India's future naval planning. Chinese naval visits to Pakistani and Sri Lankan or Iranian ports in the Indian Ocean would be a vital concern for Indian security. Russia has also impored its relations with China and had sold 24 SU-27 Flanker Aircraft alongwith 40 MiG aircraft putting a grave concern to India's naval capacity.

China has already emerged as a dominant regional power in South-East Asia, especially in the South China Sea, despite the US and the Soviet military bases in the Philippines and Vietnam respectively. There are pressures for the removal of these foreign bases which, in fact, favour China. The division of South-East Asia into two camps, the ASEAN and the Ino-Chinese states, also enable China to play a great power role in South-East Asia. Thus the South China Sea has become a base for the possible naval expansion in the Indian Ocean. India needs to monitor these developments carefully, lest it finds itself isolated and encircled in the coming decade.

China had started the development of a full fledged blue-water navy. Such a navy has to have rapid access even to the western littoral of the Indian Ocean and free movement in these waters. Chinese navy possesses a large naval infantry force, and bases her strategic defence on a nuclear trial. This navy is security considerations related to India. This is designed to give China a decisive

role in strategically observing such Indian moves as assistance to the Maldives and Sri Lanka. The naval exercises that China has conducted, during the past few years, in the South-China Sea region, and around Spartley (Naushe) and Parcel (Xisha) islands, establishment of a permanent marine observation station in the Spartleys and frequent movements of Chinese East and North fleets in the waters of the South China Sea all have long term effect on India's future naval planning.¹