



INDIA AND SOUTH ASIA: JULY/AUGUST DOSSIER

The Dossier offers an overview of the major trends and developments in Indian politics in July and August, an obituary on the occasion of the death of former President Dr. Abdul Kalam, Narendra Modi's visit to the United Arab Emirates in order to establish better links with the Islamic world and an analytical assessment of power equations in the Indian Ocean.

FOUNDATION FOR EUROPEAN
PROGRESSIVE STUDIES
FONDATION EUROPÉENNE
D'ÉTUDES PROGRESSISTES



Dr Klaus Julian Voll

FEPS Advisor on Asia

With Dr. Joyce Lobo

**FEPS
STUDIES**
JULY/AUGUST
2015

Contents

Part I India - The Domestic Landscape

- Major Developments in Indian Politics
- Death of former President Dr. Abdul Kalam

Part II India - Foreign Policy Developments

- Prime Minister Modi's visit to the United Arab Emirates

Part III South Asia

- Geopolitics and Interests in the Indian Ocean. Early contours of an India-China rivalry?

Part I India - The Domestic Landscape

By Dr. Klaus Voll

Major Developments in Indian Politics

Domestic politics in India hardened in July and August. Parliament, largely stalled by the Congress and some other opposition parties, could not pass crucial legislation on *Land Acquisition* and the *General Service Tax*. The Congress demanded first the resignation of Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj and Vasundhara Raje, Chief Minister of Rajasthan, in the context of the so-called *Lalit Modi-Gate* and also of the Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Chouhan with regard to an unbelievable large-scale bribery scandal for exams and government positions with nearly 50 unnatural and suspicious deaths.

The central Government did not give in to the Congress demands and saw nowhere improprieties. Being in a minority in the *Rajya Sabha* (Upper House), it could not master sufficient support amongst the various opposition parties to push through the intended legislation.

The lines of communication between the government and the Congress seem to be completely closed. There is an aura of mutual aggression and even hatred, which does not augur well for Indian democracy.

The elections in the 100 million state of Bihar have been announced in five phases for the end of October and early November 2015. It will be an epic battle between the BJP-led *National Democratic Alliance* (NDA) under the leadership of PM Narendra Modi and a so-called *grand coalition* between the ruling *Janata Dal United* (JDU) under Chief Minister Nitish Kumar, the *Rashtriya Janata Dal* (RJD) and the Congress. The outcome of these elections will decide the further course of Indian politics in the years to come. (The September, October and November issues will highlight these elections, the personalities, programs, caste equations and results etc.).

In Modi's erstwhile home-state Gujarat – he ruled there between 2002 and 2014 and sold Gujarat as a model state for the rest of India in the 2014 campaign – a movement seemingly out of the blue for reservations under the category of *Other Backward Castes* (OBC's) in Government jobs and educational institutions by the overall well-to-do *Patel* community, belonging to the upper castes, shattered with a demonstration of 800 000 people under the leadership of the 22-years old hitherto unknown Hardik Patel the political establishment with still unknown consequences (detailed analysis in the forthcoming September issue).

The *Saffronisation* of academic and cultural institutions through postings and programs seems to continue and is seemingly indicative of the determination of the ruling *Hindu Nationalism* to shape India according to its vision and tenets, perhaps thereby creating a new republic in the long run.

The signing of the *Naga Peace Accord* took many by surprise and could potentially bring peace to India's troubled northeast, although the contents of this accord have not been made public. It is still a work in progress with many uncertainties. (A profound analysis is forthcoming in the September issue).

The talks between the National Security Advisors of India, Ajit Doval, and Pakistan, Sartaj Aziz, got cancelled in the last minute, since India did not accept, that Aziz would have interacted in New Delhi with members of the separatist *All India People's Hurriyat Conference* from Kashmir.

Immediately after the decision between Sharif and Modi in Ufa/Russia (*BRICS* and *Shanghai Cooperation Organization* Summits) to conduct the NSA-talks, influential groups within the army and the secret service (ISI) in Pakistan tried to sabotage this decision through cease-fire violations and terrorist attacks in Punjab and Jammu.

Prime Minister Modi visited all the Central Asian countries, thereby underlining India's multiple interests in the region.

Death of former President Dr. Abdul Kalam

The former President of India, Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam (1931 – 2015), broke down during an interaction with students of the *Indian Institute of Management* in Shillong/Meghalaya and died shortly afterwards due to a heart-attack.

The father of the Indian rocket technology (*'Missile Man'*) and nuclear bomb was a trained space engineer and is considered as the architect of India's outer space and rocket programs.

As the 11th President of the Republic of India (2002-2007) he enjoyed a great popularity, particularly amongst young people, and was acclaimed as *People's President*.

Dr. Kalam did not belong to any political party and got elected to the highest office as a result of a proposal by the then Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who headed the first government of the *National Democratic Alliance* (NDA).

Dr. Kalam hailed from the island of Rameshwaram in Tamil Nadu and presented himself without any pretensions, modest and with a subtle, cute and disarming humour. Born as a Muslim, he symbolized a truly syncretistic culture, deeply rooted in Indian traditions. He wrote poems in Tamil and English.

Kalam influenced till the end with his ideas, suggestions and publications, as for instance about rural India (*"Vision 2020"*), large sections of the Indian mega-society and used most modern information techniques.

Kalam, *'with a sheer unending curiosity and a passion for science and innovation'*, said President Pranab Mukherjee, was a life-long student. He gave lectures in India and abroad, also in China, and symbolized a *"Karma Yogi, a workaholic till the very end."*

Kalam had once said: *"In my death I don't want the country to declare a holiday but to work harder."*

Part II India - Foreign Policy Developments

By Dr. Joyce Lobo

Prime Minister Modi's to the UAE

After a span of 34 years, Narendra Modi became the first Prime Minister to visit the *United Arab Emirates (UAE)* at the invitation of Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, General Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. He also met Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai.

Bilateral Talks

Modi held a bilateral meeting with the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi. The talks culminated in the issuance of a joint statement and the announcement of a *Comprehensive Strategic Partnership* between both the countries. So far the relations between the two countries range from economic, defence, security, culture, consular, people to people contacts, etc.

Terrorism: The UAE is the major economic hub and being moderate in its religious attitude, it can turn out to be a formidable partner for India in the Middle East to counter terrorist activities. Both countries have agreed to reject "*extremism and any link between religion and terrorism*". The joint statement largely deals with this aspect. This becomes important when some of the states in the Middle East have indulged in supporting terrorist and extremist groups wrecking havoc in the Levant and other places.

With regard to this both call upon "*countries not to give religious and sectarian colour to political issues and disputes, including in West and South Asia, and not to use terrorism to pursue their aims.*" Hence both sides have decided to cooperate in counter-terrorism operations; control, regulate and share information on flow of funds; intelligence sharing; and capacity building. Also the UAE has agreed to adopt the *Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism* in the United Nations as proposed by India.

Defence and security cooperation: Giving importance to security in the region, both the countries have agreed to establish a dialogue between their *National Security Councils* wherein their *National Security Advisors* would meet every six months. Also a *Strategic Security Dialogue* is yet to be established. Cooperation in cyber security, maritime security in the Gulf and the Indian Ocean Region was agreed to in the joint statement.

Both countries enjoy defence relations and agreed to continue holding regular exercises and training of naval, air, land and Special Forces, and in coastal defence. This has been a feature since both countries signed the *Defence Cooperation Agreement* in 2003. India welcomed UAE's decision to participate in the *International Fleet Review* in India in February 2016. Both have agreed to manufacture defence equipment in India.

Economic cooperation: Before the official talks Modi had informal talks with the Managing Director of the *Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA)*. He explained the economic needs and aspirations of India, and particularly about the *Make in India* initiative to turn the country into a manufacturing

hub. Also he briefed the delegation on India's investment in infrastructure, which includes the railways and industrial corridors, energy requirements to establish 100 smart cities, etc.

Hence the first day of his visit was spent in convincing the ADIA for long-term investment in India, which requires about one trillion dollars worth of investment. The ADIA within the UAE owns the *Sovereign Wealth Fund* amounting to more than 800 billion dollars worth of capital.

In the joint statement it was decided that an *UAE-India Infrastructure Investment Fund* would be established with the aim of reaching a target of USD 75 billion to support investment in India's plans for rapid expansion of next generation infrastructure, especially in railways, ports, roads, airports and industrial corridors and parks. In a similar way the UAE has agreed to encourage Indian companies in infrastructure development.

India is UAE's second largest trading partner while the latter is the third largest and the sixth largest source of energy. About 2.6 Indians reside here. Both sides agreed to increase trade by 60% in the next five years.

Modi's visit to the Masdar city, popularly called as the zero carbon city, was to learn the experience of how to incorporate environmental technologies and clean energy in a bid to establish smart cities within India. Also, India aims to produce 175 gigawatts of renewable energy—solar and wind, by 2022. Here he also met a high-level delegation of business investors from all sectors of the UAE economy. Modi emphasized that he looked towards the UAE for investment in real estate and India's need to build 50 million homes. Other areas that he mentioned were cold chain networks, ports and port-led development.

The UAE has officially supported India's candidature for a permanent membership of a reformed United Nations Security Council. One of the special gestures towards India was the decision by Abu Dhabi to allot land for the construction of a temple.

There is promise that the newly built strategic partnership is to be sustained through regular summits and high level ministerial meetings and exchanges. Sanjaya Baru of the *International Institute of Strategic Studies* says that the UAE meets all the criteria of being called a strategic partner.

Part III South Asia

Geopolitics and Interests in the Indian Ocean

Early contours of an India-China rivalry?

By Dr. Klaus Voll

International Politics are focusing increasingly on the Indian Ocean, the third largest Ocean in the world. *"The geopolitics of the Indian Ocean region is a microcosm of global geopolitical trends"*, said Nirupama Rao, a former *Foreign Secretary* in the *Indian Ministry of External Affairs* (MEA).

Besides the crisis regions in the Middle East – viewed from India as West Asia – and the deeply entrenched antagonism between India and Pakistan, China's increasing presence in the Indian Ocean with its long-term strategies (*"Maritime Silk Road"*) is contributing to this.

China questions even the notion of an *"Indian Ocean"* and does not accept, that it is India's *"strategic back-yard."* It is assumed, that China will assume a permanent military presence there. How is India reacting, also with a view to the rapidly changing power equations in the adjacent Asian mainland with its multiple crisis centres, which influence substantially major actors in the Indian Ocean?

India forms de facto a kind of bridge between the Asian parts in the West and those in the East. The tremendous energy interests particularly of China, Japan and increasingly India are primarily responsible for the strength of naval fleets and their expansion.

Huge infrastructure projects, e.g. the envisaged *Iran-Pakistan-India (IPI) Pipeline* or *TAPI* (Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India) as well as a possible under-water cable for Iranian gas to India are dependent of the objective conditions for instance in Afghanistan and Pakistan.

India with a coast-line of altogether about 7 500 km saw itself for a long time as the natural heir of the British in the Indian Ocean and indicated in the 1980's certain hegemonic ambitions with the vision of a *Blue Water Navy* during Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's regime (1984-89).

For a few decades India has been the only Asian country with its own aircraft carrier. Since 2008, the Indian navy is participating in anti-piracy activities in the *Gulf of Aden*. Since 2007 its maritime military strategy is called *"Freedom to use the Seas."*

India considers itself as a *"consensual stakeholder"*, particularly with regard to maritime security. *"The future of the Indian Ocean region is unthinkable without India"* (Nirupama Rao). About ten years ago, the late K. Subrahmanyam, once the doyen of India's security policy, emphasized, *"that India is the only strategic partner of the USA in the Indian Ocean."*

Some data about the Indian Ocean

Some 40% of the world's population are living in over forty countries of the Indian Ocean region (IOR), which touches Southeast-, South and West Asia as well as Australia. About 50% of the global container traffic is moved in the Indian Ocean and more than 70% of crude oil and oil products.

77% of India's trade by value and 90% by weight are moved via the sea. This dependency on sea trade will increase, particularly with regard to energy security. Allegedly India will rise in 2050 to be

the biggest oil importer. 40% of India's foreign trade is taking place with countries adjacent to the Indian Ocean.

In case of a conflict there is the danger, that India could be blocked by China and Pakistan.

India and its interests in the Indian Ocean

India is interested in a peaceful Indian Ocean. *"It is in our interest that we play an active role in the architecture of maritime security based on the twin principles of shared security and shared prosperity. India is well poised to play a leadership role in this regard. We have friendly and productive bilateral relations with almost all the states in the Indian Ocean region.*

While India is seen as a net security provider, we cannot carry the burden of regional security on our shoulders alone", said Nirupama Rao.

The security analyst Srinath Raghavan considers India's policy under Narendra Modi vis-à-vis the Indian Ocean rather sceptical: *"But is there a novel strategic approach at work? Take the case of the Indian Ocean region. The Foreign Secretary stated that there is a new, integrated approach in place — with emphasis on 'exchange of information and coastal surveillance, building of infrastructure and strengthening of capabilities.'*

In fact, each of these initiatives began under the previous government. For instance, the maritime domain awareness systems inaugurated during Mr. Modi's visit to Seychelles, in March 2015, were the outcome of an older initiative encompassing several Indian Ocean countries. As for beefing up our maritime capabilities, it may be worth pointing out that this year's Budget actually cut the Indian Navy's share of defence allocation to 13.5 per cent from 16 per cent in the last year. Perhaps the real problem of integration lies within the Government of India."

On the other hand, it is interesting to observe, that Japan will participate again in the *Malabar Naval Maneuvers*, which India conducts with the United States of America since more than two decades.

The Indian government and navy view the increasing Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean naturally with concern and consider this as a real challenge. Quite a few Indian security-analysts speak about a *"string of pearls"*, through which the Chinese allegedly aim to encircle India and to limit it essentially to South Asia. Others are questioning this view.

Critics assume, that China is planning for itself a major role in the region and that this will be a major concern, since India is not in a position to exercise decisive influence beyond the Arabian Sea up to the Suez Canal in the West and the Gulf of Bengal to the Malacca Street in the East. The Indian navy does not possess a long-term capability for a blockade, whereas China and Pakistan are in a position to do so vis-à-vis India.

China's role in the Indian Ocean

China and India compete for a greater strategic space in the Indian Ocean, which implies an intensifying military rivalry there. China is positioning itself with the *People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN)* increasingly from the *South China Sea* via the *Gulf of Bengal* to the *Gulf of Oman*.

In its *"White Paper on Military Strategy"* (May 2015), the first of its kind, China emphasizes the maritime struggle and the required preparations. *"PLAN should be in line with the strategic*

requirement of building air-space capabilities and conducting offensive and defensive operations. - The traditional mentality that land outweighs sea must be abandoned".

Since two years China increased its presence through hidden ways with the help of sub-marines, in order to exercise a kind of dominance in the region. These are nuclear powered sub-marines, which are allegedly accompanying anti-piracy patrols in the *Gulf of Aden* and docking in Colombo and Karachi. India views this negatively, particularly since it neglected its submarine flotilla during the last two decades.

China's iHavan-Project in the Maldives marks an important link for the *Maritime Silk Road (MSR)*. The details of this Chinese initiative from 2013 are not known, but it is assumed, *"it contains a system of linked ports, infrastructure projects and special economic zones in Southeast Asia and the northern Indian Ocean."* Till now, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Bangladesh have agreed in principle to the MSR.

In the meantime, China might be in a position – contrary to a decade ago – to act substantially in the Indian Ocean. The attacks by Somali pirates in 2007/08 provided the justification for its presence in the Indian Ocean and since then it keeps a *"Task Force"* of three to five ships.

The Indian navy chief Admiral R. K. Dhowan, remarked: *"The Chinese naval activities are being closely monitored."* China has confirmed its participation with the *Indian International Fleet Review (IFR)* in February 2016 in Visakhapatnam.

Which importance has the increasing presence and which are the real Chinese interests in the Indian Ocean?

China's oil- and gas-imports pass to a large extent through the Indian Ocean and the *Street of Malacca*. In case of a blockade its supplies would be very much in danger.

The following factors should therefore mitigate such an eventuality:

- China tries to penetrate Indian zones of influence in South Asia and put it under pressure.
- There is an economic dominance of China in the majority of India's neighbouring countries.
- The increasingly active role of China in Afghanistan and its strategic implications can also be perceived in the Indian Ocean.
- An increasing presence of the Chinese Navy in the IO
- The use of harbors of friendly countries, like for instance Hianggyi in Myanmar, Hambantota in Sri Lanka and Gwaddar in Pakistan and attempts to have access and control of islands in the Maldives. Partly these developments have been facilitated through Indian indecisiveness, like in the case of Hambantota.
- In the Maldives, China develops the *"iHavan Integrated Development Project"* in the northern most main-sea-line of communication, which connects South East Asia and China with West Asia and Europe.

"The long shadow of China's ports policy in the Indian Ocean being currently driven and characterized by both, state- and private-sponsored "infrastructure investment", foretells strategic ramifications militarily as these facilities shall end up becoming communication and surveillance facilities, in addition to being repair and replenishment centres for the Chinese

Navy — underscoring the intransigent course of Beijing's influence in South Asia and the Indian Ocean.” (Monika Chansoria)

- Economic corridors as well as pipelines from China via *Pakistan occupied Kashmir* (PoK) to Karachi/Gwadar in Pakistan and from China to the coast of Myanmar will reduce the routes for oil and gas and help avoid the *Strait of Malacca*.
- The increasing presence of China with conventional submarines and war ships not far away from the Indian coast will most probably lead to conflicts of interests with India and affect its regional maritime influence.
- China invited India to joint projects for deep-sea mining of raw materials in the Indian Ocean, in order to improve its legitimacy in this regard.

Maritime Strength in the IO: China and India in Comparison

India is fast losing its earlier maritime lead vis-à-vis China and Pakistan in the Indian Ocean. China has altogether more than 55 conventional attack-submarines (SSKs), 8 nuclear powered submarines (SSNs) and five ballistic submarines (SSBNs), which are nuclear weaponised. Another five *Jin-class SSBNs* are under construction.

India has only five Russian Kilo- and four German HDW submarines, which are out-dated and often under repair. Three of them had serious accidents during the last years.

India has till now not a single operational SSBN, since the *Arihant* has still to undergo tests. Vis-à-vis the hitherto 8 Chinese SSNs, India has only the *INS Chakra*, which is rented from Russia for training purposes, but cannot be used for an offensive role.

The Indian Navy planned a fleet of 12 conventional submarines till 2012, which should have replaced the Russian Kilos and German HDWs. Another 12 conventional submarines are planned till 2030, besides 3 *Arihant-class SSBNs*.

In reality, the existing fleet is reducing, since at any given time half of the fleet is under repair or new installations have to be fitted, altogether with big timely delays.

In view of the rapid increase in capacities of its adversary, the Indian Navy has at least demanded three nuclear powered and armed SSBNs, six nuclear powered but conventionally armed SSNs and 18 conventional Diesel SSKs. The construction of bigger air-carriers is planned, possibly with American cooperation. Vice-Admiral A. K. Singh: *“The SSBNs will help India create a strong sea-based deterrent for second missile strike if China and Pakistan in any nuclear misadventure.”*

Developments in the Maldives

The fact, that India cannot any longer dictate its terms, was evident in the context of the arrest and conviction of former President Nashid and the cancellation of the planned visit of Narendra Modi to the Maldives earlier this year.

One can assume a possible military presence of China in the Maldives. The Chinese *Yuan Class 335-*submarine passed through Maldivian waters on its way to Karachi. Indian media spoke of *“China’s deadliest attack submarine.”*

With regard to the Chinese navy presence in Maldivian waters and Chinese attempts to acquire land, Eva Abdullah, Member of Parliament for the opposition *Maldives Democratic Party* (MDP): *“Maldives is not the South China Sea. The MDP cannot support land for China to build military bases in the country.”*

Contours of India’s IOR-Diplomacy

In India one speaks of an *‘Indian Ocean policy’, ‘Indian Ocean strategy’, ‘Indian Ocean diplomacy’, ‘blue policy’* etc., although this is not officially acknowledged. But one can recognize a certain pattern of India’s expanding *“blue diplomacy”* to the whole IOR and even beyond, as the visits of Prime Minister Modi to Fiji, Australia and Japan indicated.

Under the government of the *United Progressive Alliance* in 2011 a *Trilateral Maritime Cooperation (TMC)* together with Sri Lanka and the Maldives has been formed. The Seychelles and Mauritius joined in 2014 as observers. During his recent visit Modi asked both countries to become full members of the TMC.

India speaks of a *“shared responsibility”* and to be *“sensitive about the respective interests”* and that the TMC should include other states of the IOR.

India offered itself as a partner to the Seychelles, in order to enlarge its capacities including the military ones. India launched the *Coastal Surveillance Radar Project* and delivered a second Dornier-aircraft.

Indian warships survey regularly in joint patrols the economic zones of Mauritius and the Seychelles, in order to pursue piracy and other illegal activities. India acts as *“a net security provider in the IOR.”*

India does not want to deliver only military goods, but it aims to integrate these island-countries via multilateral diplomacy into a collective net of informal organization for the security of the IOR. One thereby hopes to balance the Chinese dominance and possibly even oppose it.

Modi, who – contrary to the UPA-government – pursues an active military diplomacy, told the Prime Minister of Mauritius, Anerood Jugnauth: *“I consider our security cooperation to be a cornerstone of our strategic partnership.”*

Besides, India is interested in the expertise of Mauritius with regard to marine-economy and – ecology and signed a respective memorandum during the Modi-visit. A joint *Task Force on Ocean Economy* between India and Mauritius has been announced.

Mozambique, Madagascar and the Maldives profited from India’s control of their maritime domains, also Sri Lanka in the context of the control of its territorial waters and economic zones.

M. K. Narayanan, *National Security Advisor (NSA)* of Dr. Manmohan Singh, opined, that it would be a truly *“significant diplomatic and strategic victory”*, should India succeed in reducing the existing Chinese influence in Sri Lanka.

India and the role of Iran in the IOR

After the lifting of sanctions against Iran and the end of its isolation, it can be assumed, that the economic and trade relations – currently \$ 15bn, and aimed at \$ 30 bn. – between India and Iran will intensify in the years to come.

Besides, Iran is central for India through the Chabahar-Harbor Expansion-Project – also China shows interest there – which will provide access to Afghanistan – Herat, Kandahar, Kabul and Mazar-e-Sharif –and the rest of Central Asia and Eurasia.

Iran endeavours to play a leading role in West Asia and considers India as a strategic partner, suggesting even cooperation in the struggle against ISIL. There will be a greater maritime cooperation between Delhi and Teheran. Iran joined the *Indian Ocean Naval Forum*.

The importance of the *Straits of Hormuz*

About 40% of the global oil deliveries pass daily through the *Straits of Hormuz*, which is 34 to 40 miles wide. Most of the deliveries are going to Asia, Western Europe and the US. Japan imports 75% of its demand from this region.

The importance of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands

At the other end of the IO are the Indian Andaman and Nicobar islands. Particularly the Nicobars – adjacent to the *Straits of Malacca* – are of a certain importance. *“The islands serve less the immediate defense of India but have to be seen within the wider security of the multi-ethnic state and its role vis-à-vis South East Asia”*, so Dr. Manoj Joshi, *Observer Research Foundation (ORF)*.

Der Far Eastern Command (FEC), the first integrated *High Command* of the Indian security forces with its headquarters in Port Blair surveys with a big radar system the southern part of the Nicobar Islands and the traffic of ships, which is so important for the world economy.

Professor Bharat Karnad, *Centre for Policy Research (CPR)* in New Delhi, sees the strategic importance of these islands and observes, *“that the FEC neutralizes the enemy access via the Straits of Malacca into the Gulf of Bengal and projects its potential operational reach East of the Straits of Malacca. Indian flotilla are conducting already exercises with Japanese ships in the Yellow Sea, there have been first manoeuvres with the Chinese navy and a close cooperation with Vietnam.”*

Some ASEAN-countries welcome explicitly the Indian presence and its surveillance function in the *Gulf of Bengal* and favour joint patrols.

Further Perspectives

India, as well as China, is interested in natural resources and access to markets in the IOR and also in uninterrupted lines of communication.

Commore (Rtd) C. Uday Bhaskar, perhaps the most articulate observer of the geopolitical dimensions of India’s maritime policies, demands: *“India must evolve its own Indo-Pacific maritime policy in an appropriate and affordable manner.”*

C. Raja Mohan, India’s leading foreign and security policy analyst, observes: *“Defence and security cooperation have become quite integral to Modi’s engagement with the East Asian states and the island states of the Indian Ocean.”*

India, which, according to critics, fails to adequately deal with various powers in its *“back-yard”*, supports still the Sri Lankan proposal to transform the IO into a zone of peace.

Instead, Dr. Monika Chansoria states: *“Sri Lanka is fast becoming the pivot of rising Chinese naval presence in the IOR.”*

Nirupama Rao sketches a wider perspective for the Indian Ocean and its maritime security: *“The maritime balance in the Indian Ocean region is linked to developments in South East Asia, the Pacific Rim and the Mediterranean.*

Maritime Security cannot be sustained if there is an exclusive focus on the military dimension alone, for it has economic, political and social dimensions as well. It is also unrealistic to expect that any single power can presume for itself the role of a "sea-based balancer". Lastly, cooperation on maritime security issues could provide the necessary trust and confidence to build a flexible and adaptable Pan Asian Security Order.

India views the emerging trends with realism, building a sustainable regional security will require a cooperative effort among all regional countries on the one hand and all users of the Indian Ocean. As the main resident power in the Indian Ocean region, we have a vital stake in the evolution of a stable, open, inclusive and balanced security and cooperation architecture in the region. By definition this would need to be a consensus-based process, where all the stakeholders who have a legitimate presence in the region make their respective contributions to regional security. India stands for harnessing the forces of geo-politics for new forms of cooperation rather than it being used as an excuse for domination by any single country. That is the vision that we aspire to. And that is the vision we look forward to realizing our partnership with all countries of the Indian Ocean region.”