

Indian Quest for Hegemony in Indian Ocean: *Challenges for Pakistan*

PAKISTAN STUDIES PROJECT

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Research Paper.

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Challenges for Pakistan

Pakistan Studies
semester Project

Group#7

BSCS_G



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ABSTRACT

INDIAN QUEST FOR HEGEMONY IN INDIAN OCEAN: *CHALLENGES FOR PAKISTAN*

(A brief overview of the paper)

Pakistan's Coastline and marine territories have played a key part throughout History, before and after the emergence of Pakistan. Without a doubt a quick look, over the history and potential in the Indian Ocean region shows us just how important our Maritime territories are for the economy, trade and overall National as well as international stability.

This Blessing thus brings forth the issue of Indian Hegemony, or tension in maritime affairs and territories. Keeping this as the subject of our study we have discussed multiple topics in view of this preset point of observation.

The paper will discuss the geo-strategic and geo-economic importance and the history of our Maritime trade affairs (with India as well as internationally).

The paper follows through a thorough analysis on the aspect of Indian Hegemony in this region and the presence of Pakistan as an independent nation in these waters.

The entire analysis is concluded with the analytical view of how Pakistan's primary challenge lies in balancing its relationships with key regional and international players while enhancing its maritime capabilities to protect its interests in the Indian Ocean.

Thus, ending the in-depth analysis of this topic with a well uncovered and academically sound view on the maritime affairs of Pakistan in the aspect of Indian dominance in the waters of the Indian Ocean region.

INTRODUCTION

THE GEO-ECONOMIC & GEO-STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION (IOR)

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world, covering approximately 20% of the Earth's water surface. It is bounded by Asia to the north, Africa to the west, Australia to the east, and the Southern Ocean to the south. The Indian Ocean is home to a diverse array of marine life and plays a significant role in global weather patterns, trade, and communication. The Indian Ocean holds significant geo-economic importance due to its strategic location, natural resources, and role in global trade and communication. Here are some aspects of the Indian Ocean's geo-economic significance:

1. Trade routes and chokepoints:

The Indian Ocean is a crucial transit route for global trade, connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe. Approximately 80% of the world's seaborne oil trade passes through the Indian Ocean (Kaplan, R. D., 2009). Key chokepoints in the region include the Strait of Hormuz, the Strait of Malacca, and the Bab el-Mandeb Strait, which are vital

for the transportation of oil and other goods (Scott, S. V., 2011).

2. Energy resources:

Here are some aspects of the Indian Ocean's geo-strategic significance:

1. Regional powers and influence:

The Indian Ocean region is home to several major powers, including India, China, and Australia, as well as emerging powers such as Indonesia and South Africa. These countries are increasingly asserting their influence in the region, shaping the geopolitical landscape and leading to strategic competition (Holmes, J. R., & Yoshihara, T., 2013).

2. Maritime security and military presence:

The Indian Ocean is vital for the security of littoral states and global powers. In response to threats such as piracy, terrorism, and geopolitical tensions, countries have established military bases and increased naval presence in the region

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(McDevitt, M., 2011). The presence of international naval forces, including those from the United States, China, and India, highlights the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean (Kaplan, R. D., 2009).

3. The Indo-Pacific concept:

The Indian Ocean is increasingly considered part of the broader Indo-Pacific region, which includes the Pacific Ocean and the seas around East Asia. This concept reflects the growing strategic interdependence between these areas and the desire to maintain a rules-based order and freedom of navigation (Smith, D., & Bergin, A., 2014).

4. Maritime disputes and territorial claims:

The Indian Ocean is also the site of maritime disputes and territorial claims, particularly around the South China Sea and the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of littoral states. These disputes can lead to heightened tensions and impact regional stability (Fravel, M. T., 2011).

The geo-strategic importance of the Indian Ocean is tied to its role in connecting major powers, shaping global politics, and influencing security dynamics in the region and beyond.

Pakistan, located in South Asia, shares its southern coastline with the Arabian Sea, a region of the Indian Ocean. This connection to the Indian Ocean provides Pakistan with both opportunities and challenges in terms of trade, security, and regional politics.

Here are some aspects of Pakistan's connection to the Indian Ocean, with credible references in APA 6 format:

1. The Gwadar Port:

The Gwadar Port, located in the southwestern province of Baluchistan, is a deep-sea port that serves as a vital link between Pakistan and the Indian Ocean. Developed with Chinese assistance, the port is a key component of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is part of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) aimed at enhancing regional connectivity and trade (Dar, H. A., & Samdani, H., 2017).

2. Maritime security and naval presence:

Pakistan's connection to the Indian Ocean brings both security opportunities and challenges. The country has a significant naval presence in the region and is actively engaged in combating piracy and ensuring maritime security. Pakistan has also participated in international naval exercises and conducted joint patrols with other regional actors (Rana, S. M. H., 2014).

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3. Trade and economic potential:

Pakistan's access to the Indian Ocean is essential for its trade and economic growth. The country relies on the ocean for the import and export of goods, including energy resources like oil and gas.

Enhancing its maritime infrastructure and connectivity could lead to increased economic opportunities.

4. Regional politics and strategic competition:

Pakistan's connection to the Indian Ocean also places it at the center of strategic competition among regional and global powers, including India and China. The country's maritime interests and cooperation with China have led to concerns about the balance of power in the region and have heightened strategic rivalry with India (Rizvi, H. A., 2015).

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HISTORY OF THE INDO-PAK RELATIONSHIP IN MARITIME AND NAVAL ASPECTS

The history of Pakistan's and India's military ties has been intricate and multidimensional, marked by periods of collaboration, rivalry, and war. This is especially true of their naval relations. The roots of this relationship can be traced back to the partition of British India in 1947, which led to the creation of two separate nations - Pakistan, with a predominantly Muslim population, and India, with a predominantly Hindu population, as a result, the armed forces were split between the newly created nations, with personnel and assets divided between the newly formed countries.

Early on after gaining independence, ties between Pakistan and India remained largely amicable, and their navies worked together on various projects. In the beginning, there was cooperation in terms of training and joint exercises between the Royal Pakistan Navy (RPN) and the Indian Navy (IN), both of which inherited ships and equipment from the British Royal Navy. However, this time of collaboration was brief as tensions between the two nations started to rise.

When they went to war over the disputed region of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947–1948, Pakistan and India experienced their first significant conflict.

Both navies participated minimally in this fight, conducting naval blockades and amphibious operations on both fronts. This was the start of Pakistan and India's ongoing military rivalry, which has persisted to this day. The Indo-Pakistani War of 1965 was a full-scale conflict between Pakistan and India that took place in 1965. Both countries' naval forces were heavily involved in this conflict, conducting amphibious operations, missile attacks, and naval blockades. Several maritime confrontations between the RPN and the IN took place, including the Battle of Dwarka, in which Pakistani warships attacked the Indian naval station of Dwarka, and the Battle of Bombay, in which the Indian Navy successfully defended the port of Bombay from Pakistani naval assaults.

During the 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, which led to the establishment of Bangladesh, naval operations between Pakistan and India significantly increased. The RPN attempted to obstruct the Indian Navy's sea lines of communication but

was unable to do so due to the overwhelming Indian naval dominance. The effective naval blockade of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) by the Indian Navy resulted in the eventual capitulation.

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of Pakistani forces and the establishment of Bangladesh as an independent state.

In the years following the 1971 war, Pakistan and India's naval relationships were strained as both nations worked to reestablish their naval power. India, on the other hand, kept increasing its naval power, adding modern platforms like aircraft carriers, destroyers, and submarines to its fleet. India gained a dominant position in the Indian Ocean region as a result, creating a regional power imbalance. Pakistan replied by increasing its own naval capabilities after seeing India's naval buildup as a threat to its security. In reaction to the perceived danger from India, Pakistan in particular tried to strengthen its naval force. Pakistan purchased submarines from France and the US in the 1980s, intensifying the naval rivalry between the two nations.

Moreover, the concept of "*Akhand Bharat*" which refers to the idea of a unified Hindu-majority South Asian subcontinent including present-day Pakistan, has also had an impact on the naval relationships between Pakistan and India.

The notion of "*Akhand Bharat*" has been promoted by various Indian groups and individuals that believe in the historical and cultural unity of the South Asian region. Proponents of "*Akhand Bharat*" see Pakistan, a distinct nation-state formed after the partition of British India in 1947, measures between Pakistan and India in

the mid-1990s, both countries initiated a process as part of this unified vision of a Hindu-majority subcontinent. This concept of "*Akhand Bharat*" has been a source of contention between Pakistan and India, as it calls into question Pakistan's independence. The perceived threat of "*Akhand Bharat*" has had an impact on the two countries naval relations. Pakistan has been skeptical of India's naval capabilities and modernization plans, viewing them as possible means for asserting the concept of "*Akhand Bharat*" and projecting force in the region.

Pakistan has viewed India's naval buildup, which includes the acquisition of modern naval platforms such as aircraft carriers and submarines, as a direct danger to its security and a possible threat to its maritime interests. This perception has driven Pakistan's efforts to strengthen its own naval capabilities, acquire modern naval assets, and form strategic alliances with other countries in order to offset India's naval dominance.

In the Arabian Sea, Pakistan and India engaged in a number of naval encounters and skirmishes in the 1980s and 1990s. These included claims of naval blockades, vessel interceptions, and naval ship and aircraft clashes. These occurrences increased regional tensions and further strained the naval ties between the two nations. Efforts were made to defuse tensions and promote confidence-building.

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Pakistan and India participated in the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), which aimed to promote maritime cooperation and security in the region. These initiatives were aimed at improving communication, building trust, and fostering cooperation between the two navies.

Positive changes occurred in Pakistan and India's naval relations in the early 2000s. Both nations participated in cooperative naval drills, such as Pakistan's "Aman" exercise, which brought together naval troops from several nations to advance maritime security and cooperation. These training sessions gave navy personnel from both nations the chance to converse, exchange best practices, and improve interoperability.

However, the naval ties between Pakistan and India were once more strained as a result of the 2008 Mumbai attacks. As a result of India's enhanced security measures and accusation that Pakistan was complicit in the attacks, the region's maritime operations have come under closer scrutiny. This incident affected their naval alliance and increased tensions between the two nations

Pakistan and India have also taken part in global forums and initiatives pertaining to maritime security. Both countries are members of the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS) and have participated in its meetings and workshops, which allow naval authorities to exchange ideas, debate regional marine concerns, and seek prospects for collaboration.

Despite these efforts, the naval relationship between Pakistan and India remains complex, with ongoing regional disputes and occasional incidents that impact maritime security in the region. Issues such as disputed maritime boundaries, resource exploration, and naval modernization efforts continue to be sources of tension between the two countries.

In conclusion, the history of naval relationships between Pakistan and India after the 1971 war has been characterized by a complex interplay of strategic competition, regional geopolitics, and differing perceptions of security threats. The aftermath of the 1971 war, which resulted in the secession of East Pakistan and the birth of Bangladesh, fundamentally altered the geopolitical dynamics in the South Asian region, including the naval relationships between Pakistan and India.

MARITIME TRADE AFFAIRS THOUGHT THE YEARS

The Indian Ocean region has been a hub for trade and has been engulfed in a history of maritime Affairs. Let's go through them in the following aspects:

1) Overview

The Indian Ocean has been a central trade route for centuries. It was the maritime version of the Silk Road at during the early eras of intercontinental trade.

Maritime plays a vital role in shaping the world's economy, culture, and politics. Throughout history, nations have relied on their naval powers to establish trade routes, secure territories, and promote diplomacy. Pakistan, also being a country with a long coastline and proximity to the major maritime trade routes of the Indian Ocean, also plays an important part in maritime affairs. Let's explore the history of these maritime trade affairs through the years, focusing on Pakistan's water territories.

To understand the history of Maritime trade, we must realize that it dates back to ancient times, where civilizations relied on naval powers to establish trade routes and expand their territories. One of the earliest such routes was the Silk Road, connecting China to the Mediterranean via sea routes as well as land routes. Ancient civilizations such as the Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans established vast empires through their naval power, creating trade routes that spanning the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and the Red Sea

The Arabian Sea, which borders Pakistan's coastline, has been a significant trade route for centuries. The Indus Valley Civilization, which existed in modern-day Pakistan and India, was an ancient hub for maritime trade, exporting goods of all kinds like textiles, spices, and precious stones. The Greeks and Romans also established trade relations with the Indus Valley Civilization. Which was recorded in an ancient Greek guidebook for maritime traders; the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (waters of the Persian Gulf).

2) Historical eras

The Islamic Golden Age, which spanned from the 8th to the 14th century, saw the rise of Muslim empires such as the Abbasids, Fatimids, and Ottomans. These empires established trade routes that spanned from Europe to Asia, with the Arabian Sea playing a crucial role in their trade relations. The Mughal Empire, which ruled over present-day Pakistan and India from the 16th to the 19th century, also established maritime trade relations with countries such as Portugal, Holland, and England.

The colonial era harboring the thriving European powers such as Portugal, Spain, Holland, and England, established colonies and trade posts throughout Asia and Africa. The East India Company (British), ruled over present-day Pakistan and India from the 18th to the 19th century, establishing trade relations with countries

MARITIME TRADE AFFAIRS THOUGHT THE YEARS

using the Arabian Sea as a crucial trade route.

Pakistan was also affected by colonialism, with the British Empire ruling over Pakistan from the 19th to the 20th century. The British established major ports such as Karachi and Gwadar, which served as important trade routes for the British Empire.

such as China, Japan, and the Ottoman Empire, all whilst

Gwadar, another port located in the Baluchistan province, has emerged as a significant port in recent years. The port, was constructed with Chinese investment, holds the potential to serve as a major trade route, connecting China to the Indian Ocean through Pakistan's Coastline, as well central Asian countries.

3)Pakistan's Maritime Trade Affairs

Pakistan gained independence in 1947, and since then, the country has been involved in maritime trade affairs independently. The country's long coastline, which spanning over 1,000 km, has made it an important player in the region's maritime trade. Pakistan has established major ports such as Karachi, Gwadar, and Port Qasim, which serve as crucial trade routes for the country.

The Karachi Port, Pakistan's largest and busiest port, was established by the British in the 1900s. The port has played a vital role in Pakistan's economy, serving as a hub for maritime trade with first-world countries as well as others. The port is also a major gateway for Pakistan's exports, including textiles, leather goods, and rice. The port is also a major gateway for Pakistan's exports, including textiles, leather goods.

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INTERNATIONAL WATER DOMAINS WITH RESPECT TO PORTS

INTRODUCTION:

The Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) are two major *infrastructure and development* initiatives that have significant implications for international water domains and ports. These initiatives have been undertaken by China in order to enhance its connectivity with other regions of the world and promote economic development, *particularly in Asia, Africa, and Europe*. However, as these initiatives involve significant investments in ports and other maritime infrastructure, they also have important implications for *the management and governance of international water domains*.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS:

One of the most significant strategic implications of the BRI and CPEC for international water domains is *the expansion of Chinese influence* in these regions. As China invests in ports and other maritime infrastructure, it is likely to seek to expand its naval presence in these areas in order *to protect its*

investments and enhance its strategic influence. This could create security challenges for other countries that share these water domains, particularly if China's growing naval presence is perceived as a threat.

In addition to concerns about Chinese influence, the expansion of Chinese ports and maritime infrastructure could also create strategic competition with other countries, particularly those with existing ports and maritime capabilities. This could *lead to an arms race and an escalation of tensions in the region*, particularly if countries feel threatened by China's growing influence.

ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS:

The development of ports and other infrastructure under the BRI and CPEC also has important economic implications for international water domains and ports. On the one hand, these initiatives have the potential to create significant economic opportunities for countries that are involved in the projects. For example, the development of *Gwadar port* under the *CPEC has the potential to transform Pakistan's economy* and create new trade and investment opportunities.

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CPEC could also *create economic competition* with existing ports and

maritime industries in other countries. This could *lead to job losses and economic dislocation* in these countries, particularly if they are unable to compete with the lower costs and subsidies that China can offer. Additionally, if Chinese investments in ports and other infrastructure create a greater dependence on China, this could lead to a *loss of economic sovereignty and greater vulnerability* to Chinese economic influence.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

The construction of ports and other infrastructure can have significant environmental impacts, including *habitat destruction, pollution, and erosion*. These environmental impacts could have significant implications for international water domains and ports, particularly if they lead to the loss of important marine habitats and the *disruption of marine ecosystems*.

Furthermore, as the BRI and CPEC involve significant investments in fossil fuels *and other high-carbon industries*, they also have important implications for climate change and the management

of international water domains. Given the

However, the development of ports and other infrastructure under the BRI and

importance of international water domains for the global climate system and the impacts of climate change on marine ecosystems, it is essential that the environmental impacts of these initiatives are carefully managed and mitigated.

SECURITY IMPLICATIONS:

As the BRI and CPEC involve significant investments in ports and other maritime infrastructure, they also have important security implications for international water domains and ports. The expansion of Chinese naval presence in these areas could create *security challenges* for other countries that share these water domains, particularly if China's growing naval presence is perceived as a threat.

Additionally, the development of ports and other infrastructure under the BRI and CPEC could *create vulnerabilities and security risks*, particularly if the infrastructure is not properly designed and managed. For example, poorly designed ports and other maritime infrastructure could create vulnerabilities to terrorist attacks and other security threats.

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OPPORTUNITIES:

Increased Trade and Investment:

The BRI and CPEC initiatives have the potential to significantly increase trade and investment in the regions where they are being implemented. The development of new ports and other infrastructure will make it easier and more cost-effective to transport goods between countries, which could lead to increased economic activity and growth.

For example, the Gwadar port under the CPEC has the potential to become a major hub for trade between Pakistan and China. It is strategically located at the *entrance of the Persian Gulf*, which makes it an ideal location for the *transshipment of goods to and from the Middle East and Africa*. It is estimated that *the Gwadar port could handle up to 300 million tons* of cargo per year once fully developed.

Regional Connectivity:

The BRI and CPEC initiatives could also lead to greater connectivity and

cooperation between countries in the regions where they are being implemented. As countries work together to develop ports and other infrastructure, they may also develop stronger relationships and greater trust.

For example, the development of the *Chabahar port in Iran*, which is being funded by *India*, could help to strengthen economic and *strategic ties between India, Iran, and Afghanistan*. This port will provide a new route for goods to be transported between India and Afghanistan, bypassing Pakistan.

Economic Development:

The BRI and CPEC initiatives could also lead to significant economic development in the regions where they are being implemented. The development of new ports and other infrastructure could create new jobs and industries, which could lead to increased economic activity and growth.

For example, the development of the *Kyaukpyu port in Myanmar* under the BRI has the potential to transform the local economy. It is estimated that this port could *create up to 100,000 jobs and increase the country's GDP by 10%*.

ordinary Pakistanis are not seeing any significant economic benefits.

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CHALLENGES:

Strategic and Security Implications:

The development of ports and other infrastructure under the BRI and CPEC initiatives could have important strategic and security implications for the countries involved. Some countries may view these initiatives as a way for China to extend its influence in the region, which could lead to tensions and conflict.

For example, the development of the *Hambantota port in Sri Lanka* under the BRI has raised concerns about China's increasing influence in the region. Sri Lanka was unable to repay the loans it had taken from China for the development of the port, which led **to China taking control of the port on a 99-year lease**. This has raised concerns about China's ability to use the port for military purposes.

Environmental Impacts:

The development of new ports and *concentrated in the hands of a few elites*, while many other infrastructures

could have significant environmental impacts, particularly in areas that are ecologically sensitive. The construction of ports and other infrastructure could lead to the destruction of important habitats and the loss of biodiversity.

For example, the development of the Gwadar port in Pakistan under the CPEC has raised concerns about its impact on the local environment. The construction of the port could lead to *the destruction of important mangrove forests and the displacement of local communities*.

Fair Distribution of Economic Benefits:

There are also concerns about the fair distribution of economic benefits from the BRI and CPEC initiatives. Some countries may be left out of the economic benefits, or the benefits may be concentrated in the hands of a few elites.

For example, there are concerns about the distribution of economic benefits from the CPEC in Pakistan. Some critics have argued that the benefits of *the project are being*.

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CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the BRI and CPEC have significant implications for international water domains and ports. These initiatives have the potential to create significant economic opportunities, promote regional stability, and enhance connectivity and trade between countries. However, they also have important strategic, economic, environmental, and security implications that must be carefully managed and addressed. The international community must work together to ensure that these initiatives are developed in a sustainable and responsible manner, in order to promote greater economic development and prosperity while also preserving the health and well-being of international water domains and ports.

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PAKISTAN'S VULNERABILITY TO INDIAN HEGEMONY

Since the Indian subcontinent was divided in 1947, tensions have existed between Pakistan and India. The two nations have been at loggerheads with one another over a number of different problems, including wars, border disputes, and other disagreements. India has continuously sought to dominate the area in order to establish itself as the leading nation in South Asia. This essay examines Pakistan's susceptibility to India's aspirations for hegemony with an emphasis on India's advantages in the military and the economy compared to Pakistan.

Naval Superiority

Over the last couple decades, India has achieved considerable advancements in strengthening its naval capabilities. Its efforts to update its naval fleet have included buying new ships, submarines, and aircraft carriers. India's ambition to fortify its maritime boundaries, safeguard its shipping routes, and assert its dominance in the area has been the driving force behind its naval growth. Pakistan is worried that India's navy.

modernization initiatives may make it more susceptible to Indian naval control.

Pakistan has serious concerns about the Indian Navy's escalating might in the Indian Ocean. The SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) maritime policy of India seeks to increase its presence in the Indian Ocean and broaden its regional impact. India has developed naval stations in the Indian Ocean, especially on the strategically situated Andaman and Nicobar Islands close to the Strait of Malacca. In particular, Pakistan's vital marine lines of communication might be seriously threatened by India's naval growth and military projection capabilities in the Indian Ocean.

The naval prowess of Pakistan is insignificant in contrast to that of India. There are just a few significant surface combatants and a limited number of submarines in the Pakistan Navy, making it a relatively tiny force. Due to its limited financial resources and the international community's unwillingness to supply Pakistan cutting-edge military equipment,

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Pakistan's efforts to modernize its navy have been hindered. Pakistan is therefore, unable to contend with India's naval dominance in the area.

Concerns in Pakistan over the possibility of being shut off from the sea are a result of India's naval growth. Over 90% of Pakistan's trade is carried out through its ports, making it extremely reliant on its maritime connections. Pakistan's maritime commerce routes might be disrupted by India's naval strength, seriously harming the nation's economy.

Economic Superiority

Over the last two decades, India's economy has grown in a way that is nothing short of amazing. Its economy has been expanding on average between 7-8% year, and by 2030, it is anticipated to rank third in the globe. India's industrial, IT, and services industries have all contributed to the country's economic prosperity. Its domestic consumption has also seen a major increase because to its expanding middle class.

On the other hand, Pakistan's economy has had trouble keeping up with India's economic expansion. By 2050, it is anticipated that its economy, which has been expanding at a considerably

slower rate, would rank as the 16th biggest economy in the world.

Over 40% of Pakistan's workforce is employed in the country's agriculture industry, which is crucial to its economy. Its IT industry is still in its infancy, and its industrial sector has been reluctant to grow.

Pakistan is worried that it may fall behind India in the contest for regional economic supremacy due to India's economic progress. India's expanding economy has given it considerable financial sway, which it has been using to sway its neighbors. India has been lending money and offering other forms of support to its neighbors, which has aided in forging stronger connections. Pakistan, on the other hand, has had difficulty luring international investment and has experienced a deterioration in its economic relations with its neighbors.

India's economic superiority also gives it greater diplomatic leverage in the region. India's growing economic clout has enabled it to establish strong economic ties with major powers, including the United States, Japan, and China. India's economic influence and diplomatic alliances can put pressure on Pakistan's relations with these countries. Furthermore, India's economic development may be exploited to exert pressure on Pakistan to submit. India's

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financial sway might be used to block Pakistan's access to essential resources, deny its access to trade channels, or even impose economic penalties on it. Pakistan

is susceptible to economic pressure from India because of its reliance on its neighbors for commerce and financial support.

Conclusion

Pakistan's officials are concerned about their nation's susceptibility to India's hegemonic designs. India has enormous power in the area thanks to Pakistan's economic and naval disadvantages, which it has been utilizing to assert control over its neighbors.

Due to its few resources and reliance on its neighbors, Pakistan is vulnerable to India's designs for hegemony and must take action to rectify these weaknesses in order to protect its interests.

By enhancing its naval capabilities, Pakistan can reduce its exposure to India's stronger naval force. To strengthen its naval capabilities, Pakistan might look into other suppliers of military gear, such as China. To counter India's expanding submarine fleet, Pakistan might likewise spend in

enhancing its own submarine capabilities. Pakistan may also collaborate with its neighbors, like Iran and Oman, to establish alternate trade channels and lessen its reliance on its ports.

Pakistan will need to pursue economic reforms to accelerate its economic growth to address its susceptibility to India's economic dominance. To compete with India in these fields, Pakistan might invest in growing its industrial and IT industries. To attract international investment, it can also endeavor to upgrade its infrastructure, such as its rail and road networks. To lessen its dependency on Indian aid, Pakistan should also look at other potential economic partners like China, Russia, and the Gulf states.

In conclusion, Pakistani leaders are concerned about their nation's susceptibility to India's hegemonic ambitions.

India has enormous power in the area thanks to Pakistan's economic and naval disadvantages, which it has been utilizing to assert control over its neighbors.

To protect its interests, Pakistan will need to take action to address these weaknesses, including enhancing its naval capabilities, looking into alternate sources of military gear, making

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investments in the growth of its industrial and IT sectors and looking into alternative trading partners. These actions would help Pakistan secure its security and prosperity in the region while reducing its exposure to India's hegemonic objectives.

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FURTHER RESEARCH ON PAKISTAN'S PRESENCE IN THE I.O.R.

With 20% of the earth's surface being covered by the Indian Ocean, it is an important waterway. The Indian Quest for Hegemony in the Indian Ocean refers to India's long-standing efforts to expand its influence in the region as the largest nation in the Indian Ocean region. This article examines Pakistan's difficulties as a result of India's attempt to dominate the Indian Ocean.

India's Struggle to Rule the Indian Ocean:

Indian Ocean interest has been in India since antiquity. India has made a number of moves in the contemporary age to increase its influence in the area. Strengthening its naval capability has been one of India's main measures for strengthening its influence in the Indian Ocean. India has made significant investments in its navy, acquiring new aircraft carriers, submarines, and warships. The Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which are at the entrance to the Malacca Strait, are one location where India has erected naval outpost.

Creating strategic alliances with other nations in the area is another tactic India has used to increase its influence in the Indian Ocean.

India has partnered with other nations such as Australia, Japan, and the United States. By forming these alliances, India hopes to overthrow China's expanding sway in the area and become the dominant force in the Indian Ocean.

Enhancing Naval Capabilities: India has made great efforts to enhance its naval capabilities. India has been adding new warships and submarines to its naval fleet in recent years. India currently boasts the fourth-largest fleet in the world, and the nation aspires to dominate the Indian Ocean's maritime affairs.

India has been investing in the region's naval infrastructure in addition to purchasing new equipment. A number of naval stations have been created by India, including the INS Baaz on the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, giving it strategic control over the entry to the Malacca Strait, a crucial commerce chokepoint.

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Forming Strategic Partnerships:

India's strategic alliances with nations like the United States, Japan, and Australia are a component of a larger plan to expand its sphere of influence in the Indian Ocean. These alliances seek to make India the leading force in the Indian Ocean and oppose China's expanding influence in the area.

In the Indian Ocean, the United States has been an important ally of India. Joint naval drills between the two nations have been taking place in the area, and the United States has been giving India access to cutting-edge military hardware like fighter jets and surveillance tools.

With the establishment of a military station in Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa, Japan has also been stepping up its presence in the area. Japan and India have been collaborating closely to counter China's growing influence in the region.

Challenges for Pakistan:

Pakistan faces a number of difficulties as a result of India's effort to dominate the Indian Ocean. The growing rivalry between India and Pakistan for

influence in the region is one of the biggest obstacles.

Due to its strategic location near the mouth of the Arabian Sea, Pakistan has long been a significant participant in the Indian Ocean. However, Pakistan's regional dominance may be threatened by India's expanding strategic alliances and naval capabilities.

Conflict with India over the contentious Kashmir area poses another difficulty for Pakistan. Pakistan relies on the Indian Ocean as a major commerce route for the import of goods like oil and other necessities. If there were to be a confrontation between Pakistan and India, it could disrupt trade and have severe economic consequences for Pakistan.

Chinese Influence:

Chinese influence in the Indian Ocean is another problem for Pakistan. With the construction of military facilities in Djibouti, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan's Gwadar port, China has been expanding its influence in the region. The Indian Ocean is crucial to China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which seeks to connect China with Europe via land and marine channels.

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China's presence in the Indian Ocean offers Pakistan economic benefits but also puts its sovereignty in danger. India has criticized China's BRI and its presence in the Indian Ocean because it perceives these actions as an effort to surround India and create Chinese domination in the area.

Conclusion:

India's quest for hegemony in the Indian Ocean poses significant challenges for Pakistan. India's growing naval capabilities, strategic partnerships with other countries, and ambitions to establish its influence in the region threaten to erode Pakistan's influence and pose a potential threat to its sovereignty. However, Pakistan can also benefit from India's partnerships, particularly with the United States and Japan, which may help counter China's influence in the region. To navigate these challenges, Pakistan will need to continue to engage with regional and global partners and invest in its own naval capabilities to maintain its strategic position in the Indian Ocean.

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- *"The India-Japan Relationship and the Indo-Pacific," The Diplomat, July 2021*

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the research paper has provided an in-depth analysis of India's quest for hegemony in the Indian Ocean, with a particular focus on the challenges posed to Pakistan. India's rapidly growing economic, military, and political power has driven its increasing ambitions in the region, which has led to strategic competition between the two nations. While India's actions are primarily aimed at securing its interests and expanding its influence, Pakistan faces a complex strategic environment and must navigate the consequences of India's regional aspirations.

Pakistan's primary challenge lies in balancing its relationships with key regional and international players while enhancing its maritime capabilities to protect its interests in the Indian Ocean. It is essential for Pakistan to foster stronger cooperation with like-minded regional partners and engage with global powers that share common interests. At the same time, Pakistan must invest in modernizing its naval forces, strengthening its coastal defense infrastructure, and developing its maritime economy to ensure its long-term security and prosperity.

Although the Indian Ocean has historically been a zone of peace and cooperation, the current geopolitical climate necessitates that both India and Pakistan engage in constructive dialogue to reduce tensions and avoid potential conflicts. The two nations should seek to establish confidence-building measures and work together on issues of mutual interest, such as maritime security, environmental protection, and piracy. Ultimately, the stability and prosperity of the Indian Ocean region depends on the willingness of all stakeholders to maintain a cooperative and inclusive approach to solve shared challenges for the benefit of all.

CONCLUSIONS

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