



INDIA AND THE SECURITY OF ASIA

S.D. MUNI

Institute of South Asian Studies, Singapore



TWO FRONTS; THREE CHALLENGES

- India is at the Centre of Asia; Nehruvian geo-strategic perspective has shown a remarkable consistency.
- In terms of security, Asia has two fronts and faces three critical challenges.
- The two fronts are Western; and the Eastern.
- The three critical challenges are of:
 - * Terrorism and Religious extremism.
 - * Freedom of Navigation and Security of the Trading routes/ Sea-lanes of communication.
 - * Inter-state and regional conflicts involving major powers



THE TWO FRONTS:

- The Western Front:
 - From Pakistan to the Persian Gulf/ Arabian Sea; Includes Central Asia.
 - Crucial sources of energy and remittances (migrant labour).
 - Identity with India's largest minority; the Muslims.
- The Eastern Front:
 - From Myanmar to East Asia.
 - Territorial span across the Bay of Bengal- Andaman (s).
 - Burgeoning Trade and Investment links.
 - Theatre of global geo-political shift and rising powers.





TWO FRONTS...

- Security challenges emanating from the two fronts are not identical, though there are some common links.
- Turbulence and volatility on both the fronts generated by Terrorism and extremism on the West and Rising powers and shift in global balance on the East. Diverse challenges need differentiated approaches.
- India cannot afford to be consumed by the challenges on either of these fronts at the cost of the other. Need to maintain a balance and work out its priorities carefully.



THREE CRITICAL CHALLENGES:

- Terrorism; rooted into religious fanaticism and extremism (*Jihadi* terrorism especially).
- Freedom of navigation & Security of the sea-lanes of communication.
- Conflicts involving major powers in Asia.

(This is not to ignore or under-estimate the other security challenges i.e. political turbulence, ethnic conflicts and their spill-over within Asian countries, insurgencies and flow of illegal arms, natural disasters, epidemics, economic collapse and environmental threats etc.)



TERRORISM

- Af-Pak region hub of global terrorism.
- The volatility of this region will continue to be fuelled by:
 - (i) Degree of Pakistan's commitment and capability to fight 'global terrorism' and domestic *Jihad*; (ii) post-2014 Afghanistan; (iii) Uncertainties and turbulence in the neighbourhood- 'Arab Spring' and its fall out, Iranian Nuclear issue, Palestine question and energy market.



TERRORISM...

- India's frustration on the failure of the US and allied forces in achieving initially set objectives of eliminating terrorist forces in the Af-Pak region.
- A regional mechanism to deal with the post-2014 Afghanistan could be a preferred option, but does not appear to be feasible.
- India is willing and prepared to work with the international community and China (if possible) in ensuring stability and order in the Af-Pak and Central Asian region.
- Close engagement with Afghanistan to strengthen democratic and secular forces.



FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION; SECURITY OF SEA-LANES

- The Challenge is greater on the Western Indian Ocean sea-board.
- Since 2002 escort of US ships in the Malacca Strait, India is prepared to work with the littoral states for the security of Sea-lanes on the eastern Indian Ocean Sea-board.
- India is establishing strong Naval capabilities in Lakshya Dweep and Andaman-Nicobar Islands.
- Working out bilateral anti-piracy cooperation with key countries like Seychelles, Japan and also China.
- Active support to regional groupings and initiatives. (CSI, ARF, ADMM+8, BIMSTEC)

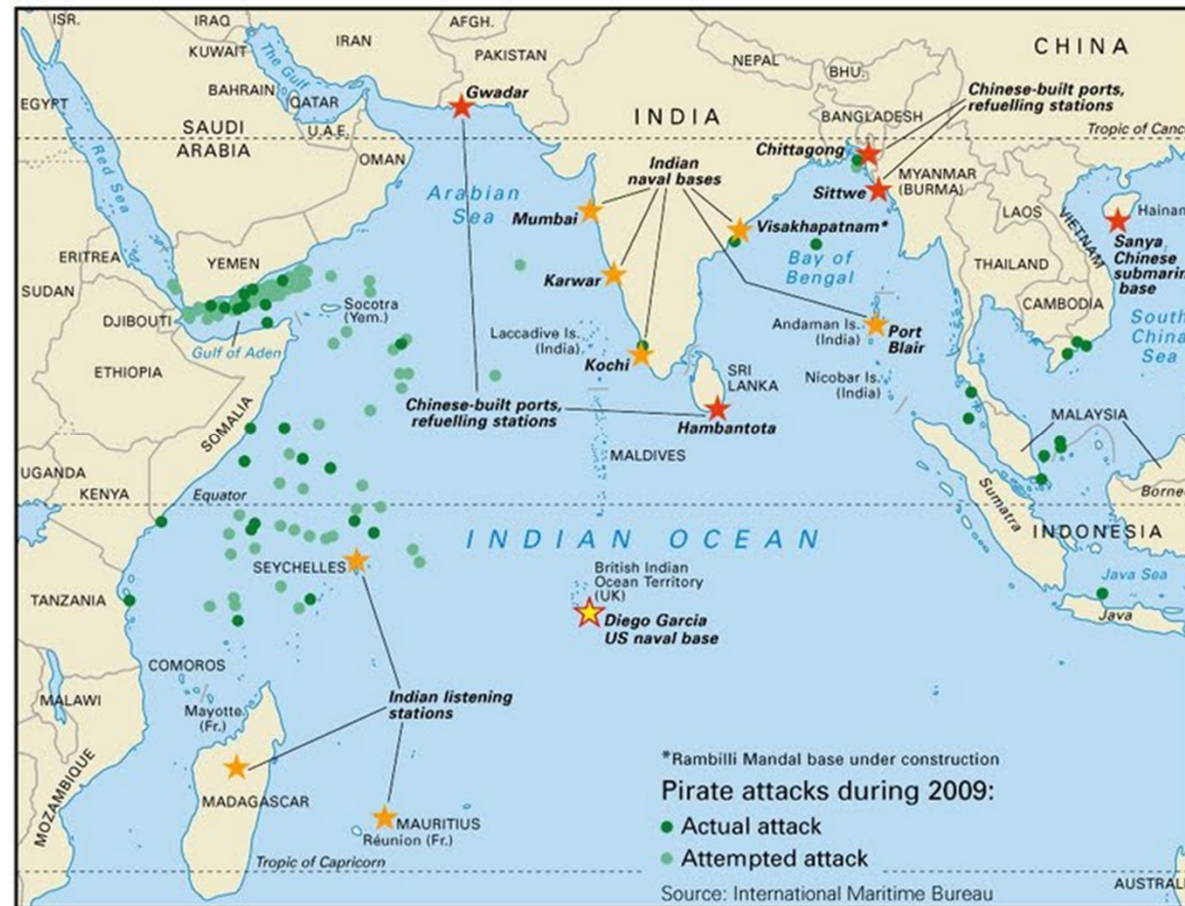


- INS Vikramaditya; Air Craft Carrier to be launched this Year.



FREEDOM OF NAVIGATION; SEALANE SECURITY

GREAT POWER COMPETITION IN THE INDIAN OCEAN



CONFLICTS INVOLVING MAJOR POWERS IN ASIA

- Remote possibility of direct conflict but active and intense flash points exist:
 - (i) Iranian Nuclear issue; (ii) Korean Peninsula;
 - (iii) The Taiwan question; (iv) South-China Sea;
 - (v) India-Pakistan-China triad.
- India's insistence is on resolving the involved issues diplomatically; through negotiations.
- Number of initiatives in building greater confidence with Pakistan and China.
- Also military modernisation and capability upgrading to deter any adversary.



CONFLICTS...MAJOR POWERS

- India's Minister of State (defence) denies that China is a threat :

I think it is not a threat. We have a very healthy economic partnership with China...Of course we do have differences on the ...border...at a very high level meeting of National security Advisers we are thrashing these things out...

As a nation with such a large population and with economic interests worldwide and as a growing economy I think we have to have those strong deterrence capabilities to make sure that none of our adversaries take us for granted...(MM Pallam Raju, May 19, 2012)



CONFLICTS...MAJOR POWERS

- India's concerns for Asian security on the Eastern front emanate from
 - imperatives of a resurgent China.
 - implications of the US "Asia-Pacific Pivot" strategy
 - unsettled strategic equation between China and the US
- India abhors either the US-China G.2, or a US-China intense Cold War/Conflict.
- India also abhors a Uni-polar Asia, dominated by any power either from within (China) or outside Asia (US).



CONFLICTS...MAJOR POWERS

- India keen to contribute towards a creative and constructive balance in Asia, in the interest of stability.
- Has responded positively to the US proposal for tri and quadrilateral consultation mechanisms including the latest for US-China-India.
- Back in 2006, Indian defence minister said:

India's role is crucial for ensuring and maintaining long-term peace, stable balance of power, economic growth and security in Asia...It straddles the land and maritime spaces between East and West and provides



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...potential energy and trade corridors to Central Asia and the Indian Ocean region. Responding to the challenges of globalization is one of the key issues faced by all nations today. As a pluralistic, democratic and English speaking society, India is well placed to respond.



ADDRESSING SECURITY CHALLENGES

- In view of Asia's diversity, no single overarching strategic architecture is possible to address complex security challenges.
- Network of differentiated structures; "***Asia is free to build open, inclusive, plural and flexible architecture to deal with these new transnational dimensions of security. Whether Asian states will be able to do so is a real test of our wisdom and skill...ASEAN must remain the bedrock on which this region deals with these issues***" (India's NSA, Shivshankar Menon. June 2010).



STRATEGIC ARCHITECTURE

- India is actively engaged with:
 - (i) Broad based regional groupings :- East Asia Summit, IOR-ARC; (ii) regional/sub-regional groupings :- ARF, SAARC; SCO; ADMM+8; BIMSTEC; (iii) trilateral and multi-lateral strategic arrangements :- India-China-Russia, India-Japan-US, India-Japan-Australia-US (In progress), India-China-US (In principle) and (iv) Bilateral strategic partnerships.
- India's growing acceptance of the strategic value of economic engagement; but poor harnessing of cultural soft-power.



CONT...

- To harness its full potential for an effective security role in Asia, India may have to fast pace its :

(i) military modernisation and out-reach capabilities;

(ii) economic reforms and wealth creation;

(iii) bureaucratic strength and resilience;

(iv) decision making and delivery of promises.



**THANKS FOR YOUR
PATIENCE.**

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