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Maritime Defense Diplomacy of Maritime Powers in the Indian Ocean Based on Their Presence in the Region

Ali Hesami¹, Abbas Khazaei², Mohsen Zarebidoki³

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Abstract

The Indian Ocean is Considered One of The Most Important and Sensitive Regions of The World, And for This Reason, Maintaining Its Security Is Very Important. The Amazing Economic Growth of Southeast and East Asian Countries Such as China, India and Japan in World Trade on The One Hand and The Special Role of The Persian Gulf and Iran as An Energy Supplying Region (Oil and Gas) On the Other Hand Show the Importance of The Indian Ocean as A Strategic Region to Connect These Two the Area Has Grown to Hundreds. The Role of This Geopolitical Region in Providing Energy, The Existence of Busy Straits, The Mass Consumer Market and The Presence of Powers with High Economic Growth Have Led to The Increasing Importance of The Global Position and The Change in The Balance of Maritime Power in It. This Research Was Done with Analytical and Descriptive Method Using Library and Documentary Sources and The Results Show That the Scene of The Indian Ocean Is of Great Importance Due to Its Key Role in Maritime Trade and This Has Made the Indian Ocean the Place the World's Major Maritime Powers Are Competing and Each Has Its Own Diplomacy in This Region.

Keywords: Naval Power-Indian Ocean-Defense Diplomacy-Geopolitics

¹ Lecturer of Navigation, *Department of Navigation, Imam Khomeini Maritime Science University, Mazandaran, Iran*, Email: amirali5611@gmail.com

² Lecturer of Navigation, *Department of Navigation, Imam Khomeini Maritime Science University, Mazandaran, Iran*, (Corresponding Author), Email: a.khazaei59@gmail.com

³ M.A in Social Sciences (Social Policy), Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran, Email: mohsen.zare92@gmail.com

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1. Introduction

Today, in the age of Information, 90% of world trade and about 65% of the world's oil is transported by sea. Globalization is made possible by the cheap and easy transportation of containers in tankers, and the Indian Ocean accounts for half of the world's container traffic. In addition, 70% of the total traffic of petroleum products passes through the Indian Ocean on its way from the Middle East to the Pacific Ocean (Harsdorf, Isaac, 2014). The characteristics that make some maritime areas and territories appear globally important and cause them to become the focus of Strategic and Geostrategic calculations of global and regional powers, in such a way that these actors want to have relative control over the straits in that maritime area or at least have the power to maneuver and to respond to its threats, there are two factors, one is economic which is divided into energy and trade and the other is military. Today, these factors have created specific and dynamic effects and consequences for the Indian Ocean, and the pursuit of strategies to make these consequences suitable has brought this sea area to the attention and competition of powers such as the United States, China, and India as the most active and effective actors in the world. And it has become a region. (Barnegat, Kahan, 2016). China's presence in the Indian Ocean and elsewhere has increased to establish naval bases and information stations throughout South Asia under the Chinese strategy "String of Pearls" in order to build naval power to achieve China's dominance in Asia. This creates a massive arms race, in response to which "countries are beefing up their weapons because of perceived threats from other countries. The 'diamond necklace' strategy," says India: "Diamonds are worth more than pearls. That is." India's current interests and assets (diamonds) in the Indian Ocean are more valuable and better protected than China's interests and assets (pear) (Karim, Mohr Aminol, 2017). The United States avoids regionalism and multilateralism in the region and turns to lateralization, unless the countries in the region are aligned with the United States. However, in the case of the Indian Ocean, the US seems to be looking more for a region that is stable and facilitates US influence through its relations with Australia and India. (Rumley, Dennis, 2013).

Diplomacy has two spheres of influence, national and international, and Defense diplomacy operates at three governmental, regional, and international levels, and in order to perform optimally at these three levels, it requires appropriate and proportionate military power. The lack of this advantage causes Defense diplomacy to be limited to traditional military cooperation at the bilateral government level. Defense Diplomacy oversees the priority and highlighting of the application and utilization of the capacity of diplomacy, dialogue and interaction and all non-coercive tools to advance Defense goals and tasks, in which the use of civilian tools to achieve the highest Defense goals and finally, the goals



national, is taken into consideration (Anami Alamdari, Sohrab, 2015) Mohammad Taghizadeh Ansari in an article entitled "China from wealth to maritime expansionism" has come to the conclusion that Beijing has plans to equip its navy with capabilities By 2020, in this vast sea area, it will make its power projection capabilities unrivaled in the region. In fact, on an international scale, China's navy is now the largest navy in the world after the United States and Russia. Acquiring such a position is the result of more than three decades of renovation and modernization of the Chinese Navy, which itself has been affected by the dynamism and economic growth and the expansion of China's national interests. (Taghizadeh Ansari, Mohammad, 2015) Mohammad Reza Hafez Nia also concludes in the article "Relationships of Great Powers in the Indian Ocean" that the expansion of America's relations with India as a regional power, on the one hand, means that America is trying It is maintaining and expanding its relations with regional powers in different areas, and on the other hand, this policy has caused a change in the geopolitical situation of the South Asian region, unlike the Cold War period. (Hafez Niya, Mohammad Reza, 2015). David Brewster, in research titled "India and China at Sea: Competition for Maritime Supremacy in the Indian Ocean", says: There is a fear that the strategic competition in the Indian Ocean will lead to further militarization in the region. China is building bases military in the Western Indian Ocean and India responds to this presence by developing its military facilities in several countries. It is not clear that India and China are willing to reach a peaceful settlement in the region. (David Brewster, 2018). Mike Ryan has stated in research titled "India-China in 2030" that currently, there are short-term and medium-term tensions in India-China relations. This will affect the sustainable security interests of the United States as well as the countries of the Indo-Pacific region. India's recovery sees itself as an emerging economic power that will soon become the most popular country in the world. China opposes India's ambitions and competes with it in South Asia, while economic cooperation between the two giants is growing, there will likely be significant economic competition between them by 2030 (Ryan, Mick, 2012). Therefore, the main issue is what is the importance of the Indian Ocean in the new world conditions and what Defense Diplomacy do each of the maritime powers in the region follow? The purpose of this research is to explain the commercial and military importance of the Indian Ocean and to examine the Defense Diplomacy of the There is a global and regional sea in this area.

2. Theoretical Foundations of Research

2.1. Defense Diplomacy

It was once believed that diplomacy is the first line of Defense and Defenses the last line of

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Diplomacy. This means that the military should only enter the arena of Diplomacy when all civilian methods have failed. As a result, there was a clear line and boundary between diplomacy as the main tool of Defense policy, and the entry of the Defense and military fields into the arena of diplomacy was often accompanied by the distrust of diplomats towards this matter, and this was the traditional approach to the issue of strategy and war, based on which: War is the continuation of politics with other tools (Alidoosti, Rahmatipour, 90). The design of Defense Diplomacy is based on the idea that hidden Defense power is not enough for deterrence, but this power must strengthen effective deterrence in practice and interaction with other governments (Saed, 1389, 66). In the field of Defense Diplomacy, which is more specific than political diplomacy, it is possible to define more practical areas for Defense Diplomacy, considering the function of military forces, which are the main actors of Defense Diplomacy, as well as the field of their application. Therefore, it seems that among the military forces, the navy can be very effective in the field of Defense Diplomacy due to its mission, which is the territorial waters and the international arena (Siyari, Khanzadi, 2013).

2.2. Naval Power

The most comprehensive and up-to-date definition: sea power is the set of capabilities of a nation in exploiting its benefits from the seas and oceans by using the waters of the world for political, economic, and military purposes in times of peace and war in order to achieve national goals and objectives (Ezzati, Ezzatullah, 1387). The elements of sea power from Alfred Mahan's point of view are: A- Geographical location. B- The natural state (weather, products, natural resources and the state of the coasts). C- The size of the land. D- The number and characteristics of the population. E- It is the characteristics of the government that is still valid today. By presenting strong historical evidence, Mahan made it clear that the emergence and continuation of great powers in the world has always been based on maritime power and through the relative superiority of the seas, and finally concluded that the necessity of ruling the world is ruling the seas (Zarqani, Seyed Hadi, 1386). The naval power of a country consists of a collection of military fleets, commercial fleets. Maritime industries and sciences (port facilities, shipbuilding and vessel repair industries, maritime training centers) (Siyari, Habibullah, 2013).

2.3. Indian Ocean

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world, with an area of 7,056,000 square kilometers, covering 20% of the earth's water surface. This ocean leads from the north to



Asia, from the west to Africa, from the east to Australia, and from the south to the Arctic Ocean (Rais, Rasul.B, 1986). The Indian Ocean has the busiest sea lines and strategic points that send the rich oil of West Asia to East Asia, Africa and Europe. And the largest amount of oil and goods trade is done in these routes. The Indian Ocean has become the highway of international trade, which has led to competition between countries to dominate key trade routes and sensitive straits. The Indian Ocean has the busiest international sea lanes, where half of the world's container cargoes, one-third of the bulk cargoes and two-thirds of the world's shipping flows through them. The waters of the Indian Ocean send heavy traffic of oil and oil products from the oil fields of the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malaga and Bab al-Mandab, and about a third of the oil is produced on its sea coasts (Nazery, Khalid, 2005).

2.4. Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean and its Economic and Military Importance

Geopolitics is the science of studying the interrelationships of geography, power, politics and the actions resulting from their combination with each other. (Hafez Niya, Mohammad Reza, 2015). The Indian Ocean is important from two perspectives, one is economic importance, which is divided into energy and trade, and the other is military importance. The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean in the world, covering 20% of the Earth's water surface, connecting East Asia to Africa, Europe and America. With rich resources of marine life and oil and natural gas, the Indian Ocean is very important in terms of the global economy. The Indian Ocean is a vital waterway for global trade and transport. This strategic waterway hosts heavy international traffic, which includes half of the world's container cargo, one-third of the bulk cargo and two-third of the world's oil transportation. In addition to providing precious minerals and energy resources, ocean fish are very important for neighboring countries for domestic consumption and export. The countries along the Indian Ocean have great diversity in climate, culture, race, religion, language, political orientation, and economic development. There are approximately 40 littoral countries or island states in the oceans that have coastlines in the waters of the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Straits of Malacca (Nazery, Khalid, 2005).

Some of the factors that make the Indian Ocean region different from other regions of the world include the following:

- Most of the world's oil resources are located on the northwest edge of the Indian Ocean, i.e., the Persian Gulf.
- The Indian Ocean basin is the most important oil trade route in the world.
- The Indian Ocean is the route of global economic flows, which is located between the three

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centers of the global economy, Southeast Asia, the European Union and North America.

- The straits of the Indian Ocean are the busiest sea areas in the world (Abbasi, Ebrahim, 2015).

There is a direct relationship between the use of the strait and the power of its coastal country, that is, the stronger and more powerful the coastal state of the strait is, the more it will be possible to use the strait as a tool for applying foreign policy in regional and global affairs. International sea routes consist of certain mechanisms such as waterways, straits and capes, there are about 200 such places in the world, but only a handful of them are of strategic importance. Straits can be defined as points that have low depth and narrow width, which safe transportation becomes very vulnerable due to these conditions, and the capacity to pass through them at the same time as the amount of maritime trade increases and the size of ships increases. It is challenged. Many of the straits are located in the vicinity of politically unstable countries, which increases the risk of maritime transport, and impairs their access and use. In recent years, the threat of terrorism has focused more attention on oil transportation flows, strategic passages can be mined or closed by military forces, missile systems or artillery. Straits are the Achilles' heel of global economic geography (Rodrigo, Jean Paul, 2015). Throughout history, the importance of reaching strategic straits has been defined under three sets of interests:

- The interests of superiority of military power and superiority in war;
- Commercial interests, which require unhindered use of waterways and straits and unhindered access to ports of trading partners;
- The benefits of direct economic control over the straits, in such a way that their use becomes exclusive and prevents competitors from doing this work (Khaniha, Nasrin, 1385).

The Indian Ocean Rim Regional Cooperation Union has 22 member countries from the three continents of Asia, Africa and the Pacific, with a population of more than 2 billion people and an area of 20.5 million square kilometers. The goals of this organization are things like strengthening sustainable growth and balanced development in the region and among the members of the union, focusing on that area of economic cooperation that provides maximum opportunities for common interests and mutual benefits, and expanding trade liberalization and removing existing obstacles on the way of trade flows, capital and technology in the Indian Ocean region has been announced.

2.5 Straits and Strategic Routes



The strategic straits of the Indian Ocean are as follows:

- A) Strait of Hormuz between the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman.
- b) Bab al-Mandeb in the South Sea to the Red Sea and the Suez Canal.
- c) Mozambique Channel between Madagascar and the African coast.
- d) Strait of Malacca between Sumatra and Malaysia (Hiranandani, Gulab Mohanlal, 2018).

In the 1990s, the rapid growth of economic globalization has increased energy consumption and made trade more competitive, and the demand for oil in developed countries and developing economies has increased, and this has caused more countries to use maritime shipping lines in the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean has the busiest international sea lanes, where half of the world's container cargoes, one-third of the bulk cargoes and two-thirds of the world's shipping flows through them. The waters of the Indian Ocean send heavy traffic of oil and oil products from the oil fields of the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malaga and Bab al-Mandab. (Hiranandani, Gulab Mohanlal, 2018).

2.6 Important Naval Powers in the Indian Ocean

According to Mahan's theory of naval supremacy, which states: it is possible to achieve the supremacy of naval power by establishing land bases along the coastline of seas and bays. The implementation of this theory by the countries of the Indian Ocean region may cause tension and competition. According to the theory of sea power supremacy and related theoretical combinations, the center of gravity of the world, both economically and strategically, is rapidly shifting towards Asia. In Asia, especially in the western Pacific and in the Indian Ocean region, fundamental changes have occurred. The world's four largest economies are now located in Asia. As a naval power in the region, after enduring the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States is not interested in engaging in another war that does not positively affect its vital national interests. And China is not willing, or likely does not have the resources, to disrupt freedom of navigation and unrestricted trade in the Indian Ocean or in the western Pacific, as the United States claims. The maritime history of the region and its geographical and economic value are reminiscent of Mahan's theory of naval forces: "both combatant and commercial", he believed more than anyone else that sea power was the main determinant of national and global power. Mahan was the first to distinguish between sea powers and land powers and to analyze their distinct roles in world history. For Mahan, land power is important, but between land power and sea power, the latter is more dominant. According to him, maintaining sea power requires a set of land bases around the world, which makes sea power expand beyond imagination (Mohd

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Aminul, 2017). The countries of the European Union, China, India, the United States, Japan and Australia have continuously increased their naval presence and military capabilities in the Indian Ocean and strategic points. Smaller countries such as Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea are also expanding their activities in the region. The United States has been one of the most important naval forces in the region for decades, with a military presence in the Persian Gulf and on the small island of Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. In the 1990s, the United States strengthened its presence in the region by establishing the Fifth Fleet in Bahrain, which includes an aircraft carrier fleet and several other joint combat forces. In addition, the United States is present in the Gulf of Aden with the aim of anti-piracy operations through the combined naval combat force¹⁵¹ and NATO naval operations (Kamerling, Susanne, 2014). Since 2007, when the issue of piracy was raised, the security of the waters of this region has been the focus of the coastal countries of this ocean. In 2008, the Indian Navy requested the countries of the region to participate in a meeting on maritime security in the region. The meeting of the naval commanders of the countries bordering the Indian Ocean, a voluntary action to increase maritime cooperation between the naval forces of the coastal countries around the Indian Ocean region by using Creating a free and comprehensive forum for discussion and exchange of regional related information. The summit attempts to establish a flow of information among naval experts that will create common understanding and multilateral solutions on the way forward. This summit consists of 24 member countries and 8 observer countries of Ions, which are placed in the following 4 regional subgroups:

پژوهشگاه علوم انسانی و مطالعات فرهنگی
پرتال جامع علوم انسانی

Table 1- Members of Indian Ocean Symposium

Observer	Coast of	West	East Coast of	Coast of
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Countries	South Asia	Asia Coast	Africa	Southeast Asia and Australia
China	Bangladesh	Iran	France	Australia
Germany	India	Oman	Kenya	Indonesia
Italy	Maldives	Saudi Arabia	Mauritius	Malaysia
Japan	Pakistan	United Arab Emirates	Mozambique	Myanmar
Madagascar	Seychelles Islands		South Africa	Singapore
Netherlands	Sri Lanka		Tanzania	Thailand
Russia	England			East Timor
Spain				

2.7 India

In recent years, India has adopted an extensive maritime strategy. Following the aspirations of power and strategic competition with China, India is expanding its maritime capabilities and security relations throughout the Indian Ocean region, paying special attention to the development of relations at the key entry points to the Western Indian Ocean, namely the Strait of Hormuz (from the Persian Gulf to the Arabian Sea). Bab al-Mandab (from the Red Sea to the Gulf of Aden) and through the Mozambique Channel in the north to the southwest of the Indian Ocean along the coast of South and East Africa (Venter, Denis, 2017). India is clearly the most important regional player in the Indian Ocean, which it has 12 major ports and 200 non-main ports that are spread along the east and west coasts and its islands. These

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facts make the security of its sea lines require a large and ambitious navy. In order to take care of their vital national interests, various Indian governments are trying to transform their navy from a coastal force that has been mostly involved with Pakistan, to a "blue navy" that is capable of far-reaching operations in the Indian Ocean and beyond. . India plans to spend at least \$12 billion on developing its navy. To add 100 new warships to its fleet, which now has 137 ships, it also plans to add six nuclear-powered submarine-launched ballistic missiles, with a focus on subsurface. India has started localizing its naval equipment. The design of anti-radar ships like the Shivalak, large destroyers like the Kochi, the construction of cruisers and the completion of the Coast Guard ships that provide strategic deterrence reflect India's desire to expand in the Indian Ocean and Bay of Bengal region. India is increasingly looking to establish a regional fleet in Southeast Asia which includes coordinated bilateral patrols with the navies of Thailand, Indonesia and annual naval exercises with Singapore (Karim, Mohd Aminul, 2017). India needs information about the Indian Ocean to determine the best location to hide three nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) and six nuclear attack submarines, and it also needs ships and satellite data to escort these submarines. India currently uses satellite communications for its surface fleet and also plans to build VLF communications stations for nuclear submarines. India has also strengthened its military installations in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands of India in the eastern Indian Ocean and has set up naval radar stations and listening stations in the islands of Seychelles, Mauritius, Madagascar in the west. Moreover, due to India-US cooperation, India today receives sufficient maritime information. No other coastal country in the Indian Ocean has a powerful and large navy. This type of physical power will determine the influence of the country in international relations. Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Pakistan plan to increase their number of submarines. In addition, at least two landlocked countries in the Indian Ocean, the United States and China, patrol the region with submarines. The increasing number of submarines in the Indian Ocean indicates that the region will become more militarized in the near future. Another sign of competition between great powers can be seen in the development of ports. Although port development projects have a civilian purpose, there are concerns that the developing force will use these ports as naval bases. Concerns about China's "String of Pearls Strategy" are just one well-known example of this type of competition. Since 2014, at least two Chinese submarines have been in the port of Sri Lanka (satoru nagao, 2014). When China took over the management of the development of Gwadar port, New Delhi started the construction of Chabahar port despite the opposition of the United States. The extensive effort of the Chinese to invest in Pakistan and especially the Gwadar port has made India feel threatened and highly motivated to cooperate in the development of the Chabahar port. Indians fear



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that Tehran's disappointment with India and China's presence in Chabahar will increase the scope of cooperation between Pakistan and China, as well as Iran and China, against India's national interests. The most important political and economic goals of India from being in Chabahar:

- Meeting India's domestic needs
- Expanding India's presence in Afghanistan and Central Asia
- Competition with China
- Competition with Pakistan
- Military goals and accelerating the process of becoming a strategic navy (Azami, Hadi, Hamkaran, 2015).

The Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal could soon become India's most advanced and sustainable developed naval facilities, which is a strategic step towards India's naval ambitions, which will consolidate the Far East Command with a joint command of the three countries at Port Blair in Andaman has established. The main base of the new fleet is under construction at Ram Baili, south of Visakhapatnam, which will accommodate India's nuclear submarine fleet and at least one aircraft carrier. India, these islands are the forerunners of India's security, which act as India's long arm in the sea. These islands, along with the Six Degree Channel (between the Nicobar Islands and Sumatra) and the Ten Degree Channel (between the Nicobar Islands and the Andaman Islands) clearly dominate the Bay of Bengal from both strategic and economic perspectives. The Malacca Strait and the Six Degree Channel are among the main straits that control entry to this region (Karim, Mohd Aminul, 2017). India is the fourth maritime power in the world, plays an important role in the region and considers the Oman Sea as its operational area. Indian Navy Outlook for 25 Geographically, the first year of the 21st century includes a crescent from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca, and the New Delhi government should be able to pursue its interests in this geographical area (Aghajani, Ahmad, 2009).

2.8 Pakistan

Pakistan has started a strategic partnership with China. More than 50 agreements have been signed between the two countries, including transport infrastructure, energy, ports, industrial zones, educational cooperation and information technology. By connecting China to the Arabian Sea, the China-Pakistan Transit Corridor (CPEC) will optimize trade potential and increase the energy security of China, Pakistan and other neighbors. This trade corridor is a

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framework for comprehensive and significant cooperation between China and Pakistan, repair and upgrade of seaports and air facilities of Gwadar port, which should be completed soon. Gwadar port is located near the Iranian border and is a gateway to the Hormuz Strait, a vital route for oil supply. There are rumors that this port may be a Chinese naval base. Gwadar, a deep, warm-water port, 470 km from Karachi, is seen as an ideal base for China in the Indian Ocean. Since 1980, China has facilitated the production of nuclear weapons and missile systems in Pakistan. As it is clear that China's relations with Pakistan have severely limited India's strategic relations with Pakistan, Pakistan's navy has the ability to build submarines, anti-ship missiles and land-based cruise missiles in order to limit India's projection of power (Karim, Mohd Aminul, 2017).

2.9 China

Over the past few years, the presence of the Chinese Navy in the Indian Ocean has been expanding, which has caused concern in India, and they believe that the operational activity of the Indian Navy in the region has decreased. China has not only entered India's traditional area of influence in the South Asian Sea; rather, by promoting cooperation with regional governments, it has made its naval forces more capable and stronger for geopolitical achievements. Beijing has increased its strategic role in the Indian Ocean with an anti-piracy force consisting of guided-missile vessels, advanced destroyers and special operations forces that appear to be more about a high-impact presence in the Indian Ocean region than a mission. Anti-piracy, since the opening of China's first overseas military facility in Djibouti, the Chinese Navy's plan to strategically access sensitive points in the Indian Ocean is very clear (Singh, Abhijit, 2018) Napoleon said in a famous sentence: Let China sleep, because if this country wakes up, it will shake the world. China continues to make attractive proposals to the countries of the Indian Ocean region in order to support the Maritime Silk Road. The expansion of China's influence in the Indian Ocean could potentially exacerbate the differences between China and India. During 2014, the presence of Chinese submarines in the Indian Ocean made New Delhi uneasy, and the Indian Navy is increasing its capabilities to respond to Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean. China's Maritime Silk Road (MSR) initiative has reduced India's popularity among a number of Indian Ocean countries, particularly Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives. New Delhi believes that the Maritime Silk Road can potentially help strengthen China's naval strategy and naval power to access and base its naval forces in the Indian Ocean for the presence of the Chinese navy and their operations in the future (Vijay, Sakhuja, 2015) China has invested in the port of Hambantota in Sri Lanka and in the mining and energy sectors in this country and is building advanced port facilities in the south of this country, facilities that have various facilities including refueling of warships. Provides Chinese. The accuracy of Sri Lanka's strategic position in the middle of the Oman Sea and the Bay of Bengal, as two strategic points in the Indian Ocean, makes the importance of China's action and India's concern about this action clearer. (Taneja, Kabir, 2015). Today, China is



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among the top shipbuilding countries, and in terms of having container ports, sea transportation, development of marine resources, inland waterways, maritime tourism, it is also among the top countries in the world and one of the top suppliers of human resources for companies. International Transportation, these capabilities have placed China among the major maritime powers in the world and the maritime power of Asia (Vijay, Sakhuja, 2015). Naval power and the largest army in the world in terms of quantitatively the most advanced land-based cruise and ballistic missiles in front of other players, namely Japan, America, and A.S.E. It, Russia and India stand in a brighter position (Baluchi, Dr. Haider Ali, 2009). Following the economic growth, China has become the largest exporter and importer in the world, 10% of the world trade of goods belongs to China, and in 2015, China has become the largest source of shipping and Shanghai port has also won the position of the largest commercial port in the world. Growing commercial interests and increased financial resources have enabled Beijing to build the largest military navy in Asia. The Chinese Navy currently has 517 warships, more than 86 submarines, 85 naval fighters equipped with missile equipment, and an aircraft carrier. In addition, China's missile capabilities that cover China's maritime influence from land bases to beyond the second chain of islands in the Pacific Ocean, and the coverage of the air force and nuclear deterrence must also be calculated. (Cronin, Patrick, 2016) In fact, on the international scale, China's navy is now considered the largest navy in the world after the United States and Russia (Taghizadeh Ansari, Mohammad, 2016).

2.10 Iran

Navy J.A. Since its establishment, Iran has been responsible for protecting the resources and interests of the Islamic Republic of Iran in the Persian Gulf and a part of the Oman Sea, until 1370 it mostly played the role of the coastal waters navy. However, since 1370, this force expanded its deployment towards the southeast coasts, i.e., the coasts of Makran, and settled all over this coast, whereas it was previously deployed in an area of 306,000 square kilometers in the Persian Gulf and a part of the Oman Sea. Today, its mission area has been expanded to the 10°N orbit in the northern Indian Ocean and includes an area of 2,070,000 square kilometers (Siari, Habibullah; Khanzadi, Hossein, 2016). The example of India is decisive. Basically, China considers Iran not only to maintain the free flow of oil from the Persian Gulf, but also as the future node of the energy security of the Silk Road. Considering the presence and dominance of American ships in the entire route of the Strait of Malaga and in the event of a possible crisis between China and the United States in the future, the Iran-Pakistan pipeline as well as the connection of Iran to Turkmenistan's gas lines towards China is and will be the savior of Beijing's vital interests (Rezaei, Masoud, 2015). Iran is one of the largest countries in the region, which has long and high influence in the Persian Gulf and the region. Currently, Iran has expanded its influence to the vast area of the Indian Ocean and beyond its borders. Expanding the capacity of the Iranian Navy and increasing

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its presence in the Indian Ocean show that Iran's power in the region has increased. This increase in attendance is a sign of the ability of the Islamic Republic of Iran Navy to grow into a blue navy. The increasing presence of Iranians in the Indian Ocean, along with a greater emphasis on cooperation and building relations with neighbors, shows the significant growth of Tehran's soft power, Iran's efforts to fight piracy in the Gulf of Aden and the West African coast with 12 anti-piracy fleets It took place from 2008 to 2011, and has brought high legitimacy to the presence of the Iranian Navy. The International Maritime Organization has praised Iran's maritime efforts against piracy in the Gulf of Aden in 2009. (Alexander, David, 2011) Iran's coastal areas and it has strengthened its navy, including controlling the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz (through which about 12 million barrels of oil pass daily) and improving key infrastructure (such as Bandar Abbas, the largest port and naval base). Iran has expanded its naval power in terms of the number of warships and personnel. The Navy of the Islamic Republic of Iran includes submarines, frigates, patrol boats, destroyers, and patrol frigates. In addition, it is armed with maritime patrol aircraft and anti-submarine helicopters for naval aviation support. Its manpower is trained for traditional naval combat and asymmetric warfare, and it has greatly improved its anti-ship missile capabilities (Sean, Brandes, 2012) The expansion of the navy's mission in the ocean waters and the effective presence in the scene of defending national interests in the Gulf of Aden and the Strait of Bab al-Mandeb created the strategic component of the army's navy and caused the enemy's attention to shift from the Strait of Hormuz to Bab al-Mandeb strait has changed its direction and, so to speak, the density of the United States in the area adjacent to the territorial waters of the Islamic Republic of Iran has decreased, and this case is one of the examples of the use of sea power (Tahani, Gholamreza, 2008).

2.11 United States of America

This country with a Defense budget of 692.8 billion dollars and a gross national product of 13,800 billion dollars has a coastline of 10,762 nautical miles, located next to both the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The country has 9 expanded joint forces commands, 6 of which are responsible for protecting US national interests in most parts of the world. America's fifth fleet is based in Bahrain and the central command in Qatar is responsible for the Northwest Indian Ocean, the sixth fleet is in the Mediterranean and the seventh fleet is in the Pacific Ocean, and these three fleets are located in the periphery of Iran. The US Navy is able to carry out independent operations due to the ability to transport and transfer forces over long distances to carry out amphibious operations, naval surveillance of forces, nuclear attack, strategic submarines with ballistic weapons and nuclear propulsion, and aircraft carriers. For this reason, deterrence capability, maritime control with conventional and non-



conventional strategic weapons, as well as establishing peace with military intervention along with the implementation of the diplomatic role by creating regional agreements in order to exercise power and combat terrorism are on its agenda (Siari, Habibullah. Khanzadi, Hossein, 2016). The main goals of the United States in the Indian Ocean region are to maintain its trade and energy communication lines, to maintain a force that is strong enough to maintain balance or to deal with most Incidents in the Middle East and ensuring the maritime security of the Indian Ocean coast. It is to achieve these goals that Washington has established military bases in Diego Garcia in the territory of the Indian Ocean and in the Persian Gulf. Other major bases are located in Djibouti, in the Horn of Africa and in Ethiopia. Each of these bases can support between fifty and five thousand personnel. Strategically, they can operate rapid reaction forces that can quickly deal with any situation. The Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean Territory, which is part of the Chagos Archipelago, is the secretive and even the most controversial US military base in the Indian Ocean, enabling the US to be the closest to sea trade routes for goods and energy to and from China. Also a trophy Monitor the sea between the east coast of the Indian Ocean and Africa (Hughes, 2016).

2.12 United Kingdom

The British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT) is one of the strategic areas of the UK in terms of access to these regions due to their location near the Middle East and East Asia. The British Indian Ocean Territory consists of 55 islands in the Chagos Archipelago, of which Diego Garcia is the largest and most important British territory for military purposes, since the area was leased to the United States in 1970 and is still used as a military base. America is important in the Indian Ocean. These islands were vital for security purposes such as operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. According to the British Ministry of Defense, about 2,500 American naval personnel are stationed there, which is an important part of Anglo-American diplomatic relations. (Bruna dos Santos Lersch, 2014. The UK maritime industry directly contributes 13.8 billion pounds and indirectly 17.9 billion pounds annually to the UK economy. Britain is an important contributor to three military alliances: NATO, the European Union and the Joint Maritime Forces (CMF), which help ensure maritime security; these coalitions employ a group of British ships, aircraft and other assets in key maritime areas of the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf. Through these international collaborations, the British influence and after the reorganization of the NATO command structure, the only senior naval commander in this organization is the British Vice Admiral of the Navy. Since the beginning of 2008, the British-led Atlanta has been focused on counter-piracy in the Indian Ocean and is carrying out EU missions off the coast of

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Somalia aimed at developing regional maritime capacity and providing military training to strengthen national government institutions. (The UK National Strategy for Maritime Security. 2014).

2.13 France

France is still the largest European country present in the Indian Ocean with the most real estate, including about 11 million square kilometers of exclusive economic zones, especially in the Mozambique Channel with more than 10 islands as part of French overseas territories. Also New Delhi, France due to the country's military bases in Djibouti, Abu Dhabi and Reunion Islands, it is considered a strategic partner in the Indian Ocean (www.irna.ir). Due to the French territory in the Indian Ocean, throughout the history of the French Navy, traditionally it has had a high degree of influence in the Indian Ocean. France has a high level of influence in the region by using island territories, diplomatic and cultural relations and military presence. Geopolitics of the Indian Ocean, on the one hand, the existing political powers and interactions with them in the geographical space of the ocean, on the other hand, are the reasons for the importance of the Indian Ocean. The Indian Ocean is important to France for the following reasons: First, the preservation of several island territories over which France enjoys exclusive maritime rights and marine products. Secondly, this ocean is located in the strategic area of the maritime route between China and Europe. This route is necessary to meet the energy needs of Europe, which is still heavily dependent on oil and gas imports, thus a convincing argument for France's presence in the region. The Indian Ocean is the importance of securing sea lanes for the import of crude oil to Europe. In general, France is looking for partnerships with African coastal countries to strengthen its presence in the Indian Ocean. Therefore, France is interested in developing and maintaining diplomatic relations with African countries in order to avoid losing influence in the Indian Ocean in the long term. Islands such as Réunion and Mayotte have to some extent ensured the permanent presence of France in the southern part of the Indian Ocean. In addition, France also has military bases and strong ties with former colonies such as Madagascar and Djibouti in the region. In total, the territory of France covers about 2.8 million square kilometers in the Indian Ocean, which provides 20% of the exclusive economic zone of France in the world. (Maupin, Agathe, 2017).

3. The Importance of Indian Ocean Security:

The transportation and security of intercontinental oil imports through the Indian Ocean is critical to global prosperity, especially for Japan. (80% of the world's oil exported from the



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Middle East), China (39%), Europe (21%) and the United States (16%) In addition, more than 80% of the world's maritime trade from only three important points in the Indian Ocean, the Strait of Hormuz (40%), Strait of Malacca (35%) and Bab al-Mandeb (8%). passes. This means that the economic powers of the North and the developing economic powers of China and India and their respective fleets have a legitimate interest in the security of the communication lines, as well as a special concern for the stability and geopolitical orientation of the countries in the vicinity of the entrances and They have outlets in the Indian Ocean. Strategic assessment and related changes show that Indian Ocean geopolitics is changing due to some important factors which are briefly as follows:

- Increasing economic and military competition between China and India.
- Increasing competition for resources in the Indian Ocean region and especially in Africa and the Middle East.
- The necessity of meeting the energy needs of the economy of northern countries and developing countries with high economic growth.
- The ability and willingness of regional governments to meet regional and global energy needs.
- Regional and global growth of terrorism and piracy.
- A growing sense of need for maritime security.
- Increasing concern about the exploitation of ocean resources on the seabed and under the sea.
- Increasing the need for cooperation in the fields of environmental security, including climate change, water, food and ocean management (Rumley, 2013).

4. Conclusion

The Indian Ocean region has the capacity to produce a lot of wealth, so different powers seek to dominate it and have always been there. In maritime Defence^[E1] diplomacy, the country's maritime Defence power should be expanded outside the territorial domain; Because the various maritime territories that have been expanded in the Convention on the Law of the Sea have provided this opportunity for the coastal countries; In other words, it has placed the Defence shield of the country in the exclusive-economic zone and the continental plateau. In naval Defence diplomacy, in addition to the armed forces necessary to carry out various actions within the framework of Defence diplomacy, there is a suitable

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environment and capacity for regional and international exploitation and capacity building, which will strengthen the country's Defence strategies and mechanisms. Therefore, the best way to take advantage of maritime Defence diplomacy is to employ a naval force that has a military, scientific, political and international nature, and according to the situation and missions it has ahead of it, compared to other forces have more possibilities to strengthen the country's diplomacy.

In the future, India will become a great power and the third largest market in the world in the international system, and it must have access to various global markets to export products and ensure its energy security. In this way, while ensuring the security of imported energy from the countries of the region, it can provide its temporary needs. The Indian Navy plans to be fully present in the Indian Ocean as in the past. The Indian Navy started the aircraft carrier construction project in 2015 and still has not made significant progress. The Indian Navy also cancelled the plan to use nuclear propulsion in this aircraft carrier in order to reduce the cost of its construction. On the other hand, China's plan is to transform its military power into a modern army by 2035, and by 2050, this country is one of the top military powers in the world. The framework of China's military strategy shows that the aim of the Chinese Navy is to focus on the protection of the territorial seas and the protection of the open seas. Beijing is also seeking to establish a permanent naval presence in the Indian Ocean region, which it currently maintains temporarily in the Indian Ocean through anti-piracy activities. But most of the time and power of the navy has been on maintaining the security of disputed territorial waters in the China Sea. China is not the enemy of the United States, but it is an equal and legitimate competitor, and India is considered a close friend of Washington. The emergence of the Indian Navy, which will soon become the third largest navy in the world after the United States and China, will act as an antidote to the development of the Chinese navy. The effort of Western countries, which see their power in the Indian Ocean declining, is taking shape to confront India and China. While these two Asian countries have sought to improve their regional and global status and enter international games in the past three decades, and now they have experienced good economic growth and are moving forward with momentum. Considering China's policies in the Indian Ocean, it is unlikely that this country intends to have a military confrontation with India. If the countries of the northern Indian Ocean converge and integrate, the countries can have a great naval power to confront the extra-regional powers. For this reason, the United States, whose naval force is still the most powerful conventional navy in the world, avoids regionalism and multilateralism in the region and turns to polarization. It is clear that the presence of trans-regional and regional powers in the Indian



Ocean can fuel competition and in the future, the Indian Ocean basin will witness new polarizations in accordance with the new global conditions. On the other hand, it is conceivable that new competitions and polarization will be created at both regional and international levels in the Indian Ocean basin.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, by using the competition of countries like India, China and Japan, which want to invest in the ports of the Makran coast, can provide the ground for the presence of these countries in the direction of the development of the Makran coast and the economic growth of the country by maintaining the national interests and authority of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Chabahar port can become a regional hub port with an ocean feature and by competing with the ports of the Persian Gulf countries, it will marginalize them. By institutionalizing its presence in various maritime areas through cooperation with countries such as India, Pakistan and China, with a continuous presence in the waters of the northern Indian Ocean, the Sea of Oman, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, Iran can extend its maritime power to regional and extra-regional countries. To show for the Islamic Republic of Iran, presence in the oceans, open and international waters is one of the requirements for maintaining security. Therefore, the maritime Defence Policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran should be strengthened according to the new conditions and requirements of this environment so that it can show a suitable and flexible response to the current situation.

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