

## China's policy of 'String of Pearls'

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### ABSTRACT

The Indian Ocean is extremely important internationally. Coasting countries hold more than two-thirds of the world's oil reserves, 35 per cent of the world's gas wealth, 60 per cent of uranium, 40 per cent of gold and 80 per cent of all diamond stocks. The Indian Ocean is extremely important for India and China. In the context of the Chinese and Indian naval policies, the geo-strategic and relevance of the Indian Ocean needs to be considered in order to fully understand the IOR's security dynamics. In the Indian Ocean, Chinese ownership consists mainly of commercial ports owned by China and station supplies owned by the central government of China. China's strategic rivalry with India's maritime dimension has been compounded by increasing resource dependence and seaway trade. The Chinese penetration of the Indian Ocean is increasing. At the end of the day, however, China will use soft diplomatic influence to enhance its position in the area. China and India are simply following in the footsteps of other major world countries that have established military bases abroad. It will undoubtedly face the name given to it by the American pentagon of Booz-Allen-Hamilton, China's 'String of Pearls,' to make this a crucial route for China. It refers to the Chinese army and the network of trade along its seas, from the Chinese region to Port Sudan. There are several major maritime shock points in these seas, such as the Malacca Strait, the Hormuz Strait and others in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives.

**Keywords:** China, Indian Ocean Region, Chinese, 'Pearls' 'String' Policy, Far Seas Operation

**T**he Indian Ocean has a high global value. More than 2/3 of global petroleum reserves, 35% of global gas reserves, 60% uranium, 40% gold and 80% of the world's diamond reserves are in the coastal countries. India and China oppose the Indian Ocean very strongly. In order to fully understand the security complications of the IOR the geo-strategic value and importance of the Indian Ocean must be understood in Chinese and Indian naval policies. Chinese assets in the Indian Ocean include mainly commercial ports owned and controlled by Chinese companies and central government supply stations. The growing wealth and reliance on maritime trade have led to its strategic rivalry with India. China has gradually penetrated the Indian Ocean. Essentially however, through soft-power diplomacy, China has increased its presence in the region. China and India follow other world major powers that have built their military assets abroad to secure access to international resources and markets. China's interference into the Indian Ocean leads to confusion. It is crucial to the Chinese naval presence in India, and the US pentagon name

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Booz-Allen-Hamilton, China's 'Pearl Line,' is likely to cope with that. This applies to China's military and commercial network from Chinese mainland to Port Sudan along its shipping lines. These sea routes are connected to several significant shocking areas such as the Malacca Strait, Hormuz and the Maldives, in Pakistan, Srilanka, Bangladesh and the Maldives.

In the Indian Ocean Region in recent years, Chinese attempts at creating powerful "nodes" have become clearer. China would have a legitimate concern for the Indian Ocean, particularly in the security calculations in India and the major powers, because of China's naval presences in those waters. Beijing politicians increasingly agree that China should further exploit itself as a global force abroad for the security of its geopolitical and strategic spatially rising interests. The IOR has become China's key focus and is inexorably linked to its strategy for the West Pacific military. It has worked hard to protect its vital supplies across the Indian Ocean through the construction of overland pipelines. Therefore, Chinese maritime involvement in the Indian Ocean is considered crucial to the advancement of their own interests. It is likely that China will tackle this via its Pearl String strategy. In a report entitled 'String of Pearls,' China 's latest naval strategy was first recognized.

There is no concrete sign, yet, that every 'Pearl' alone strongly suggests China's strategy for military force, which is also driven by Beijing's ongoing distrust of New Delhi and of America's ocean dominance. The "Pearls" also have a particular potential for military use in China. Even though China will manage to persuade one country to give up its military need, it will still be able to maintain its expected naval presence in the Indian Region, which will have significant security consequences for India and India will perhaps have to take the necessary steps to safeguard its vital interests at an appropriate moment.

Chinese interests in the Indian Ocean include mainly Chinese commercial ports and fuelling stations that operate jointly with the central government in China, owned and controlled by Chinese companies. The main two projects are a Chinese-financed commercial shipping center in Hambantota, Sri Lanka and a deep-water port in Gwadar, Pakistan, controlled by China on the mouth of the Persian gulf. Both sites expressed concerns about neighboring powers, most notably India, which is worried about the prospect of a 'strand' of Chinese Hambantota investment and some observers claim that a broader strategy of China's circle reflects Sri Lanka's dialog with the Shanghai Organization. Another concern of the Indian Government is the Port of Gwadar linked to the Arab Sea by the Karakoram route, which sees the port as clear proof of the complicity of China and Pakistan with India 's security and its economic expectations.

China builds strategic links and growth capacity to establish a potential maritime presence. These sea lines project several strategic lines, such as 'Pearls' around South Asia and India in particular. The "perl string" can not be created pursuant to a policy directed specifically by the Central Government of China. Instead, an aspect of China's foreign policy that some in the USA use might be a realistic mark. In Beijing it is difficult to share Washington 's view of China's de-facto policy. Yet economic benefits and political rhetoric have prompted countries to support China's geopolitical aspirations in the region. The "string of pearls" strategy has that ambition.

The "String of Pearls " refers to the Chinese military and trade facilities and maritime links that stretch from mainland China to the south of Port Sudan. Every knot is a "pearl" in the string that increases the parent country's overall power.

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OK, China's Perlline strategy represents a major danger because it seeks to round up India in a strategic manner across many parts of the Indian Ocean and other parts of the Indian Ocean. In a report by the defense contractor, BOOZ-Allen Hamilton, called "Energy Futures in Asia" ("Energy Future in Asia"), "Strings of pearls" was used for the first time as the definition for China's emerging maritime tactics and was commissioned by the U.S. Defense Section's Net Assessment Office in 2005.

The Karachi port currently handles 90 per cent of Pakistan's maritime trade which due to its proximity to India is highly susceptible to blocking. This happened in the Indian-Pakistan War of 1971 and was again threatened in the Kargil conflict of 1999. A potential port in 1964 is located 450 miles west of Karachi, Gwadar, a fishing village that Pakistan identified, but lacked resources to build. The strategic reach of the Indian shoreline of India will be strengthened in a modernized port in Gwadar. Gwadar is a 240-mile-long distance from the Hormuz Strait for China's strategic interest. The development of Gwadar is sponsored by China. While Pakistan's political, diplomatic and economic relations with China have been strengthened by the Gwadar project. In November 2003, China signed an agreement to provide Cambodia with military hardware and training in exchange for the right to fly from Southern China to the Gulf of Thailand. In Thailand's Kra Isthmus, China had an ambitious proposal of 20 billion for the building of a canal to enable ships to circumvent the Malacca Straits' shock points. While Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and his political opposition have been obstructed due to Thailand's unwanted role in Indonesia, it shows the size and scale of China's ambitions for this "perl ring."

A revised airbase on Woody Island, 300 nautical miles east of Vietnam in Parcel Archipelago, is a "Pearl," and Bangladesh is a shipping container facility in Chittagong. Each Chinese "Pearl" is the source of geopolitical power or military presence inside the "Pearls Line." Myanmar is a "pearl" to build a deep port in Sittwe, as it is in the Gwadar, Pakistan, to build a marine base. Building port and airfield ventures, diplomatic relations and modernising powers focused on China's style of perl. The Pearls range from China's mainland coast to the port of South China, the Straits of Malacca, the Indian Ocean, and the Arab Sea coastlines, and the Persian Gulf. China wishes to use ports as construction facilities for its forces operating in the Indian Ocean. Therefore, the so-called "line of pearls" around India has to be studied so as to protect all of Chinese strategic military infrastructure.

In order to be ignored as a deed of aggression against India and to recognise the true nature of the threat posed by this policy, it is important for India to conduct a passionate study of Perl String policy. As we know, the Chinese government gave no identity, but it was a name established by a Pentagon analyst somewhere in 2005. But it does not mean that the Chinese stopped posing a significant threat to India's energy security only after creating those perils, but that they still constitute a long-term challenge. This is true, however, or it is in trying to make this energy-related policy via the use of resources a reality. Beside that there are also big danger of submarine land attack missiles and torpedos from India's vital installations such as oil, gas, ports and nuclear plants. The recent challenge is also China's discovery of energy in water from Bangladesh and Srilanka Indian territorial waters. Beijing's Indian Ocean military strategy has a more serious impact on the safety of India than the other major powers. The broad naval presence of China in the sea will overlap with India. India. In addition, China has conducted military drills and surveys in waters off its coastal neighbours without advance warning. If Chinese ships gather

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intelligence or conduct live weapons on the Indian Ocean, there would be significant safety consequences for India. India's response to the challenges posed by China's rising naval presence within the Indian Ocean should be two-way and a judgmental mix between engagement and strategic discussion in the Indian Ocean should be two-way.

This also means that India must monitor emerging threats through the development of strategic and operational geopolitical leveraging and disarmament. India and other major powers like the United States definitely had, at this time, developed a strategic military reaction to China, using its geographical location and maritime forces. Geopolitical action needs to be aimed at improving ties to the Indian Ocean region in all dimensions – political, cultural, military, and so on. New Delhi may also be a prerequisite for the political and diplomatic involvement of the west coastlines in order to strategically undermine China.

Above everything, the shortcomings in India must be alleviated. This will fill the military / maritime space currently in vacuum. For example, maritime domain knowledge, including its anti-submarine warfare or its underwater nuclear submarines. We will need to 'harden' the major regions and central areas of their continent and islands. Indian closely surveillance of Chinese shipbuilding and defence activities will ensure sufficient warning (re)orientation of its strategies, strength systems and capabilities is given to India's security institution. There must be continuous monitoring of the Indian Ocean access routes and the production of the "Pearls" of China around India. Several Indian and American strategists have used the word "Pearl String" to set the stage for China. "Pearls" previously discussed:

### **PAKISTAN, GWADAR PORT**

Gwadar is a small fishermen's city for Pakistan and China, 450 miles to the west and east of Karachi, Iran. Gwadar Port gives China and Pakistan a range of great advantages and winners. For the Pakistani government, the port of Gwadar is considered to be hidden from the possible Indian blockade on Karachi Port, currently managing 90% of the Pakistani seafarers trade. Though it was established as a potential port in 1964, Pakistan lacked capital to build the port at that time. It is a dry deep sea, situated on the Arabian Sea pinnacle and the entrance to the Persian Gulf in the Balochistan province of Pakistan. The port is located strategically between three major regions: Middle East, Oil rich, heavily populated Pakistan and Central Asia. A new port in Gwadar will extend Pakistan's strategic depth along the coastline with India. Gwadar is one of China's main strategy footholds, financing a majority of 1.2 billion buildings, which are only 240 miles away from the HorMUZ Straits. China invested four times more in the port itself than Pakistan, and supplied Gwadar-Karachi with an additional 200 million since its construction began in 2002. Central Asia's increasing militarization, which Chinese government officials explicitly described as a major stimulus for building the Gwadar project The state-owned China Overseas holding firm was officially controlled by port on 18 February 2013 in Islamabad and President Asif Ali Zardari, Chinese Ambassador Ciu Jian, Federal Ministers, Members of the Parliament and high-level officials attended the hearing. The ceremony was held to mark the transfer to COPHC (China Overseas Port Holding Company) of the PSA (Port of Singapore Authority) concession agreement, thus further strengthening China's influence on the Gwadar project. Next, it will boost Western Chinese economic mobility by having shorter access to the sea. This will in particular help China's western trade and foster the growth of its western areas. The port is also the shipping pipeline for oil transportation from Gwadar to its west Xinjiang district as a possible Chinese naval anchor.

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The access to international trade routes is also to China's benefit. However, the effect is also severe on India, which is only 180 Nm away from the Hormuz Strait and allows Pakistan to manage the global energy jugular and the ban on Indian tankers.

### **BANGLADESH, CHITTAGONG PORT**

Bangladesh's largest maritime port is Chittagong. With its large reserves of natural gas, China respects Bangladesh and is located near Myanmar. In Chittagong, Bangladesh the government of China sponsored a container shipping facility called "Pearl." However, Bangladesh's government has maintained that the port is purely commercial and that it is not limited to military vessels, despite rumours of the possible military role of Chittagong to the Chinese people. However, close ties between Bangladesh and India's investment in infrastructure projects in Bangladesh exaggerate Chittagong's strategic importance to the Chinese.

### **SRI-LANKA, HAMBANTOTA PORT**

Hambantota port on the southern coast and only 6 NM from the shipping route of the Indian Ocean. In compliance with the 2007 agreement, China shall provide financial and technical support for the construction of Hambantota port. Development of Hambantota included:

1. Construction of container port
2. Creation of the fuel-supply bunker system for ships
3. Build an airport and other installations.

Moreover, it should be noted that Hambantota is little relevant to China, as opposed to Gwadar, in which China is constructing pipelines for oil. Therefore, it's because China has a physical naval presence in the region. Why is this port so highly invested.

### **MYANMAR, SITTWE**

Myanmar is projected in 19 fields onshore and three main offshore areas to have more than 90 billion cubic foot in natural gas reserves. Burma has the highest natural gas reserves in South-East Asia and is rich in oil.

The gas pipelines from Myanmar's Western Arakan State to Yunnan Province and Sittwe Harbour are China's major projects in Myanmar.

Over the years, China assisted Myanmar on various occasions in improving and upgrading existing military facilities. Under the 1992 Treaty, in exchange, China was able to upgrade Myanmar's naval facilities by allowing Coco Islands to be used. The Myanmar projects involve road construction between Kunming and Sittwe in 2005, construction of the maritime port in Kyaukpyu and the financing of the highway from Rangoon to Akyab. The project was carried out by a feasibility study in 2005. Chinese oil tankers from Middle East and Africa will cross Bengal once the pipelines at Sittwe and Kyaukphyu in Myanmar are fully expanded to their province of Yunnan. In contrast with the Gwadar-Xinjiang pipeline of the Pakistani government, China gives more importance to the Arakan-Yunnan pipeline because of the security involved. Arakan-Yunnan pipelines are too beneficial compared with Gwadar, will help to move the gas purchased locally from Chinese businesses to Arakan and also be of use to transport oil from Western Asia and Africa from Chinese tankers. However, its potential as a logistical supply route for the naval forces

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of China on the Indian Ocean can not be ignored. Myanmar is also Indian strategic interests in SE Asia at greatest threat.

### **HAINAN, ISLANDS**

Generally speaking, the Chinese naval institution on Hainan Island is the first of the Pearls. The PLAN Strategic Nuclear Underwater Port is the smallest PRC province that hides from spy satellites up to twenty nuclear submarines. In addition to the already expanded facilities located at Hainan, the newly constructed underwater submarine bases seem to be another evidence of Hainan's perceived significance as the control base for the claims of China in the South China Sea. Woody Islands was also named as a 'Pearl' hosting a Chinese airstrip upgrade.

### **SOUTH CHINA SEA**

The South China Sea is situated in South China, in Taiwan, the West Philippines, northwest Malaysia, and north-eastern Indonesia in Vietnam. The area has demonstrated 7,7 billion barrels of oil reserves and is estimated at 7,500 km<sup>3</sup> of natural gas reserves. The critical maritime lines between China as well as the oil-producing states in the Middle East cross the Sea of South China and turn the Chinese Government into a strategic and trouble spot. China has had unresolved sea-territorial disputes with many South-Eastern Asian countries in the hydrocarbon-rich South China Sea (SCS). Beijing has been welcoming those countries with steps such as the 2002 'non-binding' signature from the turn of the century onwards. China-ASEAN, the 14th agreement on the "CSS" and the 2005 Joint offshore drilling Agreement in contested areas with Vietnam and the Philippines. Although several CBMs were taken, military tensions continued, until November 2007, when Chinese milliard-dimensional exercises brought protests into Vietnam in the disputed Paracel Islands. This one month later, India also was sucked into. Surrounding atmosphere has designated Blocks 127 and 128 (near Paracel Island) for "illegal" exploration powers afforded by the NGC vidsh to Vietnam and issued a New Delhi demarcation. This means that Vietnam can not seek Indian financial / technological assistance while the Chinese-Vietnam Joint Exploration Agreement permits exploration of resources. This is a symbol of the Chinese-Indian rivalry.

Later on the exercise and visiting the army increased Chinese security contacts with IOR coasts and even major powers. As a result, India has gradually broadened its naval forays into the Pacific. India conducted a naval exercise in 2000 which was a major milestone. India's first South China Sea exercise demonstrated Indian 's increasing naval reach. It invited Chinese protests. In April / May 2007, the Indian Navy engaged in a series of Western Pacific exercises.

The stability of China is strongly influenced by events in the South China Sea. For the protection of its trade and even for energy imports in India, the South China Sea is important, but not so critical for China. It is not difficult to detect the root of China-India strategic maritime rivalry. The approach of China is clearly driven by strong strategic imperatives in the Indian Ocean region, which would demand its military projections into the India Ocean in the coming decades. Chinese naval vessels patrol the seas of South China heavily and conflicting territorial claims regularly broke out during naval clashes. As a result, the Chinese attempts to control the South China Sea have been speculating so much on China's greater ambitions to build a power projection chain across Asia. Nevertheless, in these seas, it expects to face the strong naval force of India, maybe also in America, despite China-India 's competitive and even adversarial capacity. On the other hand, equilibrium is necessary for India. China's rising strength. Failure to do that would

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undermine India's growing position as a regional power, with significant consequences for India's supreme national security interests.

### **MALLACA, STRAITS**

The Straits of Malacca and Hormuz are now China's main waterways. Close cooperation with Myanmar and Pakistan is therefore also important. It is one of the biggest shipping lanes in the world. Cross this Strait almost 80 percent of Chinese oil. Basically, everyone controlling Malacca threatens China's oil supply route. The strategic supply of energy in China is most vulnerable in Malacca Straits, the largest maritime shock point between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Yet China still remained subtle and indirect in its rivalry with India. The improvements in India's Andaman and Nicobar have greatly improved India's capacity for military missions in the Malacca Straits to the irritation of China.

### **COCO ISLANDS**

The Coco Islands were previously part of India under British rule, but in the absence of closer control they were moved to Myanmar. It is reported that the islands were leased to the People's Republic of China from 1994. Various sources have been published. These are a couple of strategic islands located in the East Indian Ocean under the Yangon Division in Burma. The main Coco Islands (10x2) and the smaller Coco Islands (5x1) are divided by Alexandra Canal. They are separated from the Andaman by Coco Pipe.

The Coco Islands' Chinese operations include the development of a Coco Island Maritime Base and the setting up of SIGINT and ELINT in the Great Coco Island Collection Station. They are too important for China, especially from the Bay of Bengal into the Strait of Malacca, to track ships and boats moving from the islands. The Indian analyst recorded that Indian tai service command could endanger Port Blair (190 Nm away).

### **CONCLUSION**

The paper analyses the dangers posed by these "Pearls" and stresses that while pearls are not the greatest military danger, they are not an energy security threat to India. The marine presence of China in the waters will result in India being overlapped. China's energy exploitation in waters along the Indian Territorial Seas, including Bangladesh and Srilanka, is also a latent threat. Unlike China, India primarily relies on foreign oil producers for its energy needs. Around 89% of India's oil is imported and about 33% of India's energy consumption is supplied with oil. The security of the main communication maritime lines is therefore recognized as an economic imperative. In the past, India has been primarily focussed on pirating and terrorist counterattacks against Somali pirates across the Indian West Sea.

Many such activities in combination with the US forces have been performed against terrorism and anti-piracy, whereas Indian officials generally have limited joint military exercises to mutual interest programs, mainly pursuant to UN sanctions. However, renewed US interest in fighting the threat of Islamic terrorism in South Asia has led to more concrete US and India-based military cooperation. The US military officials and strategists widely see this growing bilateral relationship as an opportunity to counteract threats from the Chinese regional hegemony. Popular concerns that the growing involvement of China in the Indian Ocean threatens India's economic and military stability are promoting bilateral cooperation efforts against China's risings.

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