

p-ISSN : 2708-2121 | e-ISSN : 2708-3616

DOI (Journal): 10.31703/gsssr
DOI (Volume): 10.31703/gsssr/.2024(IX)
DOI (Issue): 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX.I)



GSSSR

GLOBAL STRATEGIC & SECURITY STUDIES REVIEW

VOL. IX, ISSUE I, WINTER (MARCH-2024)



Double-blind Peer-review Research Journal
www.gsssrjournal.com
© Global Strategic & Security Studies Review

Article Title

Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation

Global Strategic & Security Studies Review

p-ISSN: 2708-2121 **e-ISSN:** 2708-3616

DOI(journal): 10.31703/gsssr

Volume: IX (2024)

DOI (volume): 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX)

Issue: I (Winter-March 2024)

DOI(Issue): 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I)

Home Page

www.gsssrjournal.com

Volume: IX (2024)

<https://www.gsssrjournal.com/Current-issues>

Issue: I-Winter (March-2024)

<https://www.gsssrjournal.com/Current-issues/9/1/20234>

Scope

<https://www.gsssrjournal.com/about-us/scope>

Submission

<https://humaglobe.com/index.php/gsssr/submissions>

Google Scholar



Visit Us



Abstract

Indo-US maritime cooperation is a symbol of a strategic alliance built on shared geopolitical interests and a commitment to preserving peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Two major maritime powers, India and the United States, have come to understand the value of cooperating to find solutions to pressing problems including disaster assistance, freedom of navigation, maritime security, and counterterrorism. This cooperation is exemplified by joint naval drills, intelligence exchange, and technology transfer, all of which are indicative of a common understanding of the significance of the maritime domain in global affairs. The alliance aims to safeguard maritime commons, promote economic expansion, and advance a norm-based international order. Combining their naval force allows both nations to respond to emerging threats and preserve regional peace.

Keywords: Indo-Pacific, National Security, Navigation, Counterterrorism

Authors:

Ashfaq Ahmad:(Corresponding Author)

Lecturer, Department of International Relations, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad, Pakistan.
(Email: aamailk@numl.edu.pk)

Pages: 16-27

DOI: 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02

DOI link:[https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024\(IX-I\).02](https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02)

Article link: <http://www.gsssrjournal.com/article/A-b-c>

Full-text Link: <https://gsssrjournal.com/fulltext/>

Pdf link: <https://www.gsssrjournal.com/jadmin/Auther/31rv1olA2.pdf>

Citing this Article

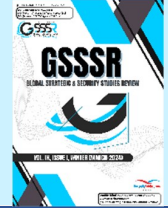
02		Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation					
Pages	16-27	Author	Ashfaq Ahmad		DOI	10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02	
		Year	2024	Volume	IX	Issue	I
Referencing & Citing Styles	APA	Ahmad, A. (2024). Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation. <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX(1), 16-27. https://doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02					
	CHICAGO	Ahmad, Ashfaq. 2024. "Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation." <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> IX (I):16-27. doi: 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02.					
	HARVARD	AHMAD, A. 2024. Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation. <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX, 16-27.					
	MHRA	Ahmad, Ashfaq. 2024. 'Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation', <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX: 16-27.					
	MLA	Ahmad, Ashfaq. "Nature of Indo-Us Maritime Cooperation." <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> IX.I (2024): 16-27. Print.					
	OXFORD	Ahmad, Ashfaq (2024), 'Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation', <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> , IX (I), 16-27.					
	TURABIAN	Ahmad, Ashfaq. "Nature of Indo-Us Maritime Cooperation." <i>Global Strategic & Security Studies Review</i> IX, no. I (2024): 16-27. https://dx.doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02 .					



Global Strategic & Security Studies Review

www.gprjournal.com

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.31703/glsr>



Pages: 16-27

URL:[https://doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024\(IX-I\).02](https://doi.org/10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02)

Doi: 10.31703/gsssr.2024(IX-I).02



Title

Nature of INDO-US Maritime Cooperation

- [Contents](#)
- [Introduction](#)
- [Security Cooperation](#)
- [Malabar Exercises](#)
- [Maritime Domain Awareness \(MDA\)](#)
- [Conclusion](#)
- [References](#)

Abstract

Indo-US maritime cooperation is a symbol of a strategic alliance built on shared geopolitical interests and a commitment to preserving peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region. Two major maritime powers, India and the United States, have come to understand the value of cooperating to find solutions to pressing problems including disaster assistance, freedom of navigation, maritime security, and counterterrorism. This cooperation is exemplified by joint naval drills, intelligence exchange, and technology transfer, all of which are indicative of a common understanding of the significance of the maritime domain in global affairs. The alliance aims to safeguard maritime commons, promote economic expansion, and advance a norm-based international order. Combining their naval force allows both nations to respond to emerging threats and preserve regional peace.

Authors:

Ashfaq Ahmad:(Corresponding Author)

Lecturer, Department of International Relations, National University of Modern Languages (NUML), Islamabad, Pakistan.

(Email: aamailk@numl.edu.pk)

Keywords: [Indo-Pacific](#), [National Security](#), [Navigation](#), [Counterterrorism](#)

Introduction

Maritime security or naval cooperation is a concept in which states collaborate with each other to secure the seaborne and maritime trade routes. When nations take precautions in accordance with UNCLOS to safeguard economic and political freedom at sea. States cooperate for maritime security bilaterally as well as through regional cooperation. Piracy, human trafficking, the illicit arms trade, environmental degradation, and the danger of terrorism are only some of the non-traditional issues that are addressed through this maritime cooperation. Sometimes states cooperate with each other to protect their economic and security interest in the seas and they try to

maximize their naval power to counter such threats. States act offensively as well as defensively to protect their own economic and military interest in seas (Thakker & Sahagl, 2019).

In accordance with the perspective of British marine theorist Geoffrey Till, the concept of maritime security pertains to the establishment and maintenance of a state of orderly conditions within the maritime realm, wherein commercial activities are carried out via waterways. In many states logistical needs be safeguarded against all hazards and threats. The concept of a sound maritime order is not subject to debate regarding which criteria should be considered as indicative of effective order at sea. Notwithstanding the provisions of UNCLOS,



it is possible that maritime nation-states with aspirations for maritime dominance may be inclined to disregard the aforementioned convention.

Prominent maritime nations have developed their strategic perspectives by drawing upon the principles of sea force theory, as first stated by Alfred Thayer Mahan. described as The assertion that the control of the sea through maritime commerce and naval supremacy is a significant factor in exerting prevailing influence globally, and is a primary component in the material aspects contributing to the power and wealth of nations (Vermeer, 2017). According to Christian Bueger, marine security goes beyond the typical dimensions. Maritime security links numerous challenges via current security principles and adjusts to emergent temporary issues. Bueger still views sea power, particularly naval strength, as an instrument for attaining national security. In maritime security, sea power refers to how nation-states conduct their fleets outside of their jurisdictional waterways. The main goal of conventional maritime security is to project state naval might for military purposes, safeguard SLOCs, and raise awareness of a state's presence in international seas. Safeguarding the Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) encompasses a range of measures such as search and rescue operations, mitigating oil spills in marine environments, overseeing marine infrastructure, and undertaking counter-piracy and counter-terrorism initiatives (Sibal, 2020).

Asia-Pacific and Indo-Pacific region have gained considerable importance in the 21st century, serving as a central area for both competition and collaboration among the United States, China, India, and neighboring states. This region become important due to its geo-strategic location and developing geo-economics opportunities for the regional as well as world powers. This region carries 60% of the world's population and more than \$40 trillion in Gross Domestic Product (GDP). It also lies the important straits like Malacca, Sunda, and Lombok which provide trade routes for energy and food transportation vital for East and West. The ascent of China as a formidable economic force in the 21st century is evidenced by its consistent growth rate of 7 to 10% in the economy and the need for energy from this route become the reason for a new geo-politics competition in this region.

The pursuit of regional hegemony in East Asia by China, driven by its economic rise, has engendered tensions among major global actors.

India and the United States are regarded as strategic allies and have friendly diplomatic, economic, and military ties. Both governments have a foundation for cooperation in the field of marine security thanks to the geopolitics of the Asia-Pacific area. The aforementioned alignment reflects President Barack Obama's strategic change in the United States policy focus from the Middle East to the Asia-Pacific region. The Pivot to Asia policy was adopted and put into effect as a result of this change. Which saw the United Republics begin to provide both military and economic support to Oceania's East Asian republics. Due to the significance of the Indian Ocean area, the United States has shifted its alignment towards India in its most recent plan to resist Chinese dominance in this region (Tertia & Perwita, 2018).

Nature of INDO- US Naval Cooperation

They used a tripartite strategy to promote marine cooperation with India. This strategy includes marine domain awareness, maritime security, and a common vision.

Unified Vision

A common marine vision between the United States and India is the first step toward bilateral maritime cooperation between the two nations. States must acknowledge the importance of a common vision in the context of globalization and growing interregional connectivity so as to work together to achieve their shared goals. As a result, countries are unable to solve the different issues they face by unilateral action. Even for well-established naval powers such as the United States, naval operations in the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean regions present significant challenges that call for cooperation and engagement from regional actors, since the capabilities of individual naval powers may prove insufficient. Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson described the United States and India as two pillars of stability, relying on each other to achieve Asia Pacific geostrategic goals.

Both governments signed the Joint Strategic Vision Statement for the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean Region in 2015 while US President Barack Obama was in town. Additionally, a number of actions were taken within the parameters of this

viewpoint to strengthen the strategy pertaining to the Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean region (C. A. Singh, 2015). Multiple agreements have been established with the aim of boosting regional economic integration through increased connectivity, guaranteeing marine security, and enabling unhindered navigation and overflight throughout the area. This is a result of the convergence of ideas among numerous stakeholders. According to this view, both governments consent to abide by and accept the fundamentals of international law, human rights, and the UNCLOS-defined law of the sea. Additionally, both parties pledge to fight together against human trafficking, terrorism, piracy, and the illegal trade in weapons of mass destruction via marine channels.

Security Cooperation

The second facet of collaboration is the improvement of maritime security cooperation between the United States and India by means of concrete actions, dialogue, and organizing military personnel and joint exercise meetings. There are two phases to the bilateral marine security coordination between the two governments. In keeping with their shared goals of advancing security and peace in the region, the first phase includes a strong framework for regional security. The ramifications of the extensive military agreements between the United States and India for the maritime environment are covered in the second stage.

In order to promote a stable and resilient security environment, the United States' first regional policy gave great weight to the establishment of regional alliances in the Indian Ocean and wider Indo-Pacific areas. Due to its large coastline (almost 7000 kilometers) and its location as a peninsula extending into the Indian Ocean, India has great strategic value within the United States' Indo-Pacific policy (Mishra, 2018b). There are two main categories in which India and the US agree on issues related to the regional security agenda. First of all, because they see China as a nation that defies convention and is expanding, both nations understand the need for counter-regional capability consolidation in order to maintain the current rules-based system. Furthermore, both countries view India as a nation that largely complies with laws but also has a

tendency to break them. As a countermeasure, they thereby acknowledge the need for the regional concentration of competencies.

According to the second theoretical framework, the bilateral ties between the US and India serve as the backbone of a regional alliance with other countries that share similar goals and values. Australia and the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) have recently joined the United States, India, and Japan in the combined military training program known as the Malabar exercises. These changes reflect an increasing tendency in multilateral alliances that prioritize security, with a focus on Indo-Pacific security in particular (Pant & Joshi, 2015).

Over the past decade, the Indo-US security cooperation has been expanded via different agreements and understandings, notably in the marine sector. Significant ramifications for marine security have arisen from this, especially for India. The two parties' defense connection has been reorganized and their collaboration has been boosted as a result of the previously mentioned remarkable activities. When it comes to naval operations, the two states have never collaborated well throughout history. The first MALABAR naval exercises began in 1992, after the end of the Cold War. In response to China's rise to prominence in the global economy and its increasingly assertive posture in East Asia, both countries have increased their maritime cooperation in an effort to offset China's growing influence in the area. Both governments have formed a number of bilateral and international agreements, such as QUAD, DTTI, LEMOA, COMCOSA, and BECA, in order to achieve their different objectives.

Malabar Exercises

India opened up its policies and began to forge closer ties with the United States following the end of the Cold War. First, both nations decided to begin naval drills in the Indo-Pacific area. 1992 saw the start of the Malabar exercises, which were a bilateral interaction between the Indian and American naval forces. Up to the first part of 2007, these drills were carried out yearly in various parts of the Western Indian Ocean. Following a brief pause from 1998 to 2001—which was ascribed to India's nuclear testing at Pokhran—Malabar activities resumed in 2002. Between 1992 and 2007,

there was an expansion in the scope of naval exercises, encompassing a wider range of participating navies, a larger exercise area, and an increase in the intricacy of naval operations (G. S. Khurana, 2008). The 2003 Malabar exercise was significant because it was the first to be conducted in three dimensions—on surface, sub-surface, and air platforms—and because it included Visit Board Search and Seizure (VBSS) operations against suspicious boats.

The adoption of these measures may be considered imperative with the aim of reducing the possibility of terrorist organizations using water transportation, particularly with regard to the unlawful trafficking of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs). Expeditionary operations were first used in the Malabar war in November 2006; this has important ramifications for India given its growing normative need to preserve regional peace in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Indian Army infantry and Indian Marine Commandos (MARCOS) worked in tandem with US Marine Corps Marines and the USS Boxer, which is stationed at the Landing Helicopter Dock (LDH). The Indian Navy was able to acquire important knowledge on how to handle expeditionary platforms and stand-off amphibious operations efficiently. After a period of three months, the Indian Navy proceeded to rename the USS Trenton to INS Jalashwa. The first drill to be performed outside of the Indian Ocean was the first Malabar-07-1 drill, which was conducted in April 2007. While the event was technically a bilateral one between the United States and India, it was closely associated with TRILATEX-07, a multinational exercise that took place in mid-April 2007 and included Japan. The naval forces of Australia, Japan, and Singapore were involved in the Malabar-07-2 exercise in September 2007 (Garge, 2015). The Malabar 07-1 exercise was characterized by the execution of maritime strike missions, dissimilar air combat, and buddy-refueling maneuvers involving Indian Air Force Jaguars and US F-18 Super Hornet aircraft.

Malabar-08, which was reduced to a two-party agreement between India and the US, marked the beginning of the problems. Even though Malabar-09 was a trilateral exercise including Japan and India, the latter chose not to participate in the IN-US Marines amphibious assault exercise that was

slated to occur on Okinawa in September 2009 (Rath, C. S. 2005). In 2012, the Indian government rejected the Indian Air Force's request to integrate Jaguar aircraft into the Malabar-12. These particular aircraft are specially designed to carry out marine attacks in support of naval operations. The Jaguars of the Indian Air Force had participated in Malabar 07-2, which was held at the same location five years prior. The Malabar workouts were lowered from 2010 to 2013 to a bilateral level without any subsequent augmentation in their intricacy. In general, the Malabar exercises experienced a continuous expansion in both magnitude and scope, culminating in their apex in 2007. The intensity level of the exercise regimen has decreased. This study examines the fundamental trends from 1992 to 2014 in relation to the nations involved and the exercise areas (G. S. Khurana, 2014).

The US and India carried out bilateral naval drills of strategic importance between 1992 and 2014. Australia and Japan took part in these exercises at this time, but they did not continue as regular participants. However, in 2014, Australia and Japan joined the Malabar strategic exercises, which were moving toward institutionalization. They participate in these exercises on a regular basis to improve their capacity to work together, their naval prowess, maritime security, and their might in marine environments (Kaura, 2020).

The above graph demonstrates how the United States and India both integrate naval cooperation. These frequent drills are part of their strategy to fortify their influence throughout the Asia-Pacific area and to increase their might there in order to resist China, the region's growing danger. Due to their understanding of the Malabar exercises' strategic significance, both states regularly display their weaponry in this area.

Defense Technology Trade Initiative (DTTI)

India is continually upgrading all facets of its armed forces in order to counter geopolitical issues in its maritime backyard and along its frontiers. India is strengthening the competences and capabilities of the recently established commercial defense industry while also investing in platforms and assets. Considering the financial and budgetary constraints, the military complex must establish

itself in India. In this specific business, the United States has encountered difficulties keeping up with rivals like Russia, France, Israel, and the United Kingdom (Singh, 2024).

Despite this, the United States continues to hold its leading position as the world's most powerful nation, with a wide range of cutting-edge and deadly military systems, technology, and a strong military-industrial complex. As such, the United States is crucial to India's efforts to modernize its military, which includes both its armed forces and defense sector. The long-term goal of strengthening bilateral security cooperation between the US and India has been hampered for a significant amount of time by the different national bureaucratic structures, purchasing practices, and budgeting processes. The Department of Defense put in place a system in 2012 with the goal of reducing or eliminating the aforementioned barriers to encourage improved collaboration (Das, 2012).

As a consequence of the aforementioned initiative, the India-US Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) was established in 2012. With the goal of strengthening their shared commitment to increase defense trade, lower administrative barriers, expedite program schedules, promote cooperative technology transfer, improve cooperative research, and enable joint development and production of defense equipment to modernize and sustain their respective military forces, the governments of India and the United States have joined forces to create the Defense Technology Transfer Initiative (DTTI) (Ray, 2024).

The forum's goal is to establish a long-term framework for fostering and sustaining dialogue on military technology and industrial cooperation between American and Indian businesses. Representatives of the US and the Indian MOD will be able to obtain facts, data, expertise, and other pertinent information from individual members of the private sector. As a result, they present at the conference their perspectives on both short- and long-term industrial research and development partnership and co-production operations (Mishra, 2017a). The gathering will also promote discussion on issues that might hinder cooperation between industry and government, including foreign direct investment, supply security, trade restrictions

related to defense, and the availability of sensitive or vital commodities (Kronstadt, 2018).

The United States accelerated the pace of technology transfer with India in 2016 after reclassifying itself as that nation's major defense partner. India and the US currently collaborate on defense trade and technology at a level equivalent to that of the US' closest friends and allies as a result of the categorization change and the Defense Trade and Technology Initiative (DTTI) (Ramesh, 2024). The Defense Technology and Trade Initiative's (DTTI) main goal is carried out through yearly conferences that bring together senior government representatives from the Ministry of Defense and the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment. Ellen M. Lord, representing Washington, and Mr. Raj Kumar, representing New Delhi, signed a statement of purpose during the most recent summit. Through the cooperative development and manufacturing of military platforms and allied equipment, the statement sought to improve defense technology cooperation (Tehseen, M., 2017). Land, marine, air, and aircraft carrier technologies are the focus of four cooperative working groups that are facilitated by the Defense Technologies and Trade Initiative (DTTI).

These groups' principal goal is to support activities that have been unanimously agreed upon within their respective fields. Projects have been grouped and chosen into three main categories by the Defense Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI). The deployment of lightweight small weapons technologies, air-launched small unmanned systems, and intelligence surveillance, targeting, and reconnaissance (ISTAR) platforms and equipment will be prioritized in the near future (Sinha, 2023). The panel recognized the technologies related to maritime domain awareness and VAMRAM as medium-term objectives. These technologies are related to aircraft maintenance and maritime domain awareness in the context of virtual, augmented, and mixed reality. As part of its long-term strategic goals, the Indian Army has suggested developing terrain-shaping obstacles and a counter-UAS (counter-drone), rocket, artillery, and mortar (CURAM) system (Mishra, 2018a).

In May 2018, India became a Major Defense Partner (MDP) of the United States, a significant development that marked a significant

improvement in the two countries' diplomatic relations. India is now the third nation to have the Strategic Trade Authorization-1 (STA-1) designation, having been bestowed by the US in an attempt to bolster defense ties. This action will make it easier to sell high-tech goods to India, with an emphasis on the defense and civil space industries. Each of these treaties has far-reaching ramifications for the Asian marine sector, which are made possible by increased technological accessibility and collaboration (Snyder, G. H. [2002](#)).

Significant progress has been made as a result of the bilateral agreements between the US and India, which may have an impact on both countries' marine security. Significant aircraft carrier technology is among the several technologies the United States is giving India that have an impact on Asian maritime security. The United States and India's cooperation in aircraft carrier technology is essential to creating a developing maritime advantage (with respect to open sea routes, combined maneuvers, and the perceived threat from China) through future cooperative projects that combine similar technologies and improve connectivity (Mishra, 2018b).

A Joint Working Group on Aircraft Carrier Technology Collaboration (JWGACTC) has been formed by the Indo-US DTTI to look into several areas of cooperation related to aircraft carrier technology. One of the most advanced aircraft carrier technologies, the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS), is being evaluated for the next carrier being built by the Indian Navy (Saha, P. [2020](#)). The Electromagnetic airplane Launch System (EMALS) can launch airplanes of various weights from a variety of platforms that are outfitted with various catapult designs. Furthermore, the United States and India have coordinated their maritime surveillance capabilities, deploying Boeing P-8Is and P-8As simultaneously. India hopes to improve its maritime surveillance capabilities by using drone technology that was donated by the United States. In order to help India protect its marine resources in the Indian Ocean, the US has authorized the sale of Predator-B unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to that nation. Furthermore, one very compelling facet of the current naval cooperation between the United States and India concerns the field of antisubmarine warfare (Saeed, M. [2017](#)).

Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement

On August 29, 2016, US Defense Secretary Ashton Carter and Indian Defense Minister Manohar Parrikar signed the LEMOA into formal force. Enhancing collaboration and coordination between the armed forces of the United States and India is the main goal of this agreement. The armed forces of both countries shall have the right, subject to the terms and conditions set forth in this agreement, to use each other's military installations for the purpose of replenishing and refueling (Konwer, [2023](#)). There will also be other facilities and logistical support provided on a reimbursement basis, all within a prearranged framework. The Indian Navy's capabilities, along with those of its army and air force overall, would be significantly enhanced by the LEMOA. It is anticipated that the proposed agreement will make it easier to regulate how both nations' land, air, and naval stations are used for maintenance and resupply (Paskal, C. [2021](#)).

The four key categories that will be prioritized under the LEMOA agreement are port calls, instructional activities, cooperative drills, and charitable aid and disaster relief. Further requirements call for individual mutual consent between the two countries. Since this is essentially a logistics agreement, there will be no military presence from either nation on the other's territory. Through this agreement, the US will benefit from Indian infrastructure while India will have access to a global network of US facilities for logistical support. This deal will provide innovative new opportunities for commerce, technology, and defense relationships (White, 2021).

For both India and the US, the LEMOA is a crucial step. The agreement is the starting point for an automated approval process that will allow the two militaries to share each other's facilities for a variety of purposes, following more than ten years of talks. This agreement will lay the groundwork for further military industry cooperation between the two countries (Flint, [2024](#)). The contention put up by Indian strategists and intellectuals is that the goal of this agreement is not to establish an alliance with the US against India's neighbors. Still, strengthening India's military might is the main objective of this accord. India would have access to the US military's well-planned network of

installations. India will be able to carry out large-scale operations that were previously beyond their operational capacity thanks to this arrangement, which would improve its maritime capabilities (Lai, D. [2013](#)). Additionally, in response to the expanding influence of the Chinese military fleet in the Indian Ocean region, this pact will strengthen India's marine capabilities.

India, with its vast network of bases and facilities throughout China, would be able to counter China's 'String of Pearls' plan in the Indian Ocean. Because it makes naval cooperation between the governments in the Asia-Pacific area easier, the LEMOA is very important (Chauhan & Khurana, 2019). The US is already refocusing its emphasis on this region rather than the Middle East. India is unaffected by American involvement in the region since its objectives in the Asia-Pacific region align with those of the US. Consequently, both nations have allowed one another access to their naval bases. In both nations, efforts to combat terrorists and pirates will be intensified (Bharti, [2023](#)).

The Indian economy and trade will be impacted by successful anti-piracy efforts in the Indian Ocean region, which will also boost the country's marine industry and commerce. With this agreement, both nations will be able to shift from a buyer-seller military relationship to a strategic partnership that will lead to joint research, development, and production of advanced weaponry systems in India (Khan, S. H. [2018](#)). So LEMOA provided the ground to both states to increase their maritime security cooperation in the emerging security cloud of the Asia Pacific region, to enhance their footprints in coming years.

The Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement as well as the Communications and Information Security Memorandums of Agreement:

The goal of the United States is to export sensitive military hardware to another country, which means that the CISMOA's legislative requirements must be followed. The United States modified the original nomenclature in order to fortify marine cooperation with India, culminating in the creation of the COMCASA. This evolution can be likened to that of the LEMOA, which was once known as the LSA. The CISMOA agreements, including the

current discussions concerning COMCASA with India, attempt to provide the requisite legal structure for the transfer of command, control, communications, computer intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) data to a foreign government. The incorporation of data streams offering a thorough tactical perspective evident (Jia, C. [2017](#)).

This general program's scope covers a number of topics, such as configuration management, following common standards, information security, information assurance, and permission for mutual use of communication systems. The framework relates to the sharing of telecommunications support and services linked to the creation of interconnections. The US National Security Agency (NSA) produced information security agreements with the goal of granting permitted access to protected networks; these agreements are not to be confused with CISMOA agreements (Rosen & Jackson, 2017).

During the first 2+2 meetings at the military and foreign ministry level in 2018, the two governments inked a bilateral agreement on communication, compatibility, and security. The previously mentioned clause creates the legal foundation for the US to send codes and sensitive communication equipment, allowing the transfer of current operating data. This technology is primarily used to provide ground-to-air communication on American-made military aircraft. Improving situational awareness in combat situations is its main goal. The United States created a data link that is well-known for its high degree of security in enabling communication (Heiduk, W. [2020](#)).

It also provides India with access to a vast American intelligence archive that includes real-time imagery. This advancement makes it easier to use unmanned aerial vehicles with weapons and to seamlessly share operational intelligence in real-time. By using a common communication infrastructure, both groups will be able to operate together in an interoperable environment, which will allow the military to carry out its operations with greater effectiveness (Mallick, 2018).

Should this agreement fall through, the US will have difficulty supplying India with cutting-edge encrypted communication systems. For example, India is forced to depend on less secure commercial technology for sophisticated platforms like the P-8I

maritime surveillance aircraft and the C-130 J. During the last ten years, a large number of defense-related purchases that have come from the US, totaling more than \$15 billion, have necessitated the creation of more extensive contracts and agreements in order to adhere to US export control laws regarding defense technology theft and diversion (Lee, 2023). A large percentage of the purchased goods were missing certain crucial components. Therefore, the once-in-service C-17 and C-130 J aircraft were unable to interface with the Link-16 network and utilize the digital transponders, secure voice terminals, single channel ground airborne radio systems, Identification Friend or Foe (IFF) system, and satellite communication (SATCOM) trans-receivers. The long-range maritime surveillance aircraft P-8I Poseidon was supplied without secure UHF voice or Link-11/Link-16 capability (Kim & Min, 2020).

The absence of this capacity makes it more difficult for fighter aircraft, both current and prospective, to participate in tactical networks, which are crucial for developing a thorough understanding of the aerial combat environment (Kronstadt et al., 2021). Furthermore, the Indian Army still lacks GPS-guided weapons and fire-and-forget smart weaponry because of a lack of legislative restrictions. The installation of cutting-edge communication equipment on major platforms, such as planes being given to India, would be authorized by the US government.

The COMCASA agreement not only strengthens India's ability to conduct cooperative military operations with the US Navy but also facilitates India's cooperation with other foreign naval forces that have similar technological capabilities. These factors—which also include those of Australia, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and South Korea—have a significant impact on the Indo-Pacific region. With the arrangement, the US will be able to supply India with electronic systems, encrypted communication, and cutting-edge aircraft, all while maintaining the confidentiality of its C4ISR capabilities. According to this agreement, India will essentially give the United States real-time intelligence on military deployments in China and Pakistan (E. Manyin, D. 2012). The Doklam standoff was a watershed moment for India's perspective on the COMCASA when it recognized

the value of U.S. information on Chinese army deployments in assessing its strategy.

The COMCASA agreement not only strengthens India's ability to conduct cooperative military operations with the US Navy but also facilitates India's cooperation with other foreign naval forces that have similar technological capabilities. These factors—which also include those of Australia, Singapore, South Korea, Japan, and South Korea—have a significant impact on the Indo-Pacific region. With the arrangement, the US will be able to supply India with electronic systems, encrypted communication, and cutting-edge aircraft, all while maintaining the confidentiality of its C4ISR capabilities. According to this agreement, India will essentially give the United States real-time intelligence on military deployments in China and Pakistan (Shida, 2019). Collaboration of this nature will offer critical mass and content for many of the enterprises in the newly designated military manufacturing corridors, helping to accelerate the Make in India effort (Clif, R. 2020).

However, India has significant misgivings about the COMCASA accord. Among the worries are data leaks, which are seen as an invasive tactic, US spying on India's command and control, and India's restricted strategic independence. As part of this agreement, US officials had to install and inspect US-made equipment on military stations and platforms located in India. India was also worried about data leaks to other nations, including Pakistan, which operates F-16 fighter planes manufactured in the United States. There is a worry that the US's penetration of India's command and control networks could allow it to monitor or eavesdrop on the country's operational communications and possibly share this information with other organizations—like Pakistan, where the US maintains a hostile or neutral position (Ben Dolven, B. V. 2020).

Basic Exchange Agreement (BECA)

On October 27, 2020, during the 2 + 2 Indo-US ministerial conference, a basic exchange agreement was inked. As per the terms mentioned in the agreement, the United States would have the right to share with India topographical data, critical geospatial data, and classified satellite data for the purposes of missile targeting and long-range navigation. The BECA is the final agreement in a

series of four core defense agreements signed by the two governments. Its goal is to make more military cooperation possible in areas including technology, force interoperability, and sensitive information sharing. Both nations signed three important agreements prior to the BECA's signature. In order to create a framework for upholding security standards in the preservation of vital information shared between the United States and India, the General Security of Military Information Agreement (GSOMIA) was formally adopted in 2002. 2016 also saw the official signing of the Logistics Exchange Memorandum Agreement (LEMOA). The Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) was signed following India's designation as a Major Defence Partner. Now, both countries are able to utilize each other's military facilities. A bilateral agreement known as the COMCASA was signed in 2018 between the US and India with the goal of improving military interoperability and streamlining the supply of cutting-edge US technology to India (Ali, R. U. 2018).

The objective of the suggested system is to expedite the transfer of many types of data, including but not limited to sophisticated satellite and topographic data, maps, nautical and aeronautical charts, geodetic, geophysical, geomagnetic, and gravitational data. Furthermore, this technical development would facilitate the integration of high-fidelity GPS capabilities into military hardware, allowing for precision targeting of adversaries with missile systems as well as precise navigation and prompt real-time information distribution. The agreement's main focus is on exchanging sensitive information, with a special emphasis on protecting it from being disclosed to any other parties (Baig & Waheed, 2022).

The planned application of the BECA to enable the sharing of geospatial intelligence with the United States is anticipated to enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of automated hardware and weapons, such as drones, ballistic missiles, and cruise missiles, in the Indian armed forces. It is expected that the implementation and use of this strategic strategy would significantly improve the Indian military's understanding of the current situation as it develops conventional or nuclear offensive actions against its adversaries. The BECA) would enable India to integrate contemporary

avionics and navigational aids into defense hardware that it has purchased from the United States.

A variety of US platforms have been effectively employed by India, including the C-17 Globemaster III for military transport, the Boeing Chinook CH-47 for heavy-lift helicopter deployment, the Boeing Apache for anti-tank operations, the P-8I for overland reconnaissance, and the Lockheed Martin C-130J for troop airlifting. The implementation of BECA is expected to result in an increase in military cooperation between the United States and India. This agreement will improve the evaluation of their bilateral military-to-military exchanges and make it easier to carry out cooperative military drills, training programs, and expert exchanges. Promoting military forces' interoperability and the transmission of sensitive and classified data is one of the standard agreements that the US signs with its closest allies.

The capabilities of these intelligence satellites include electronic intelligence (ELINT) and communication intelligence (COMINT). These satellites regularly provide the US with significant amounts of geographic information, allowing for real-time updates on military operations worldwide. This data would be sent to India via the BECA. With this agreement, India would have the ability to get extremely accurate geospatial data, making it possible to use it in a variety of combat situations. Given the regional consequences related to these recent changes, the United States is aggressively developing its strategic and military relationships with India (Bano, 2020).

Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)

The development of regional capabilities in the areas of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), with a focus on white shipping, and capacity reinforcement to address non-traditional challenges like maritime piracy and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HA/DR) is the third facet of the maritime collaboration between the United States and India. It has been demonstrated that cooperation and coordination between the fleets in these areas is essential to the development of a thorough shared vision in the maritime sector (Lai, D. 2013).

MDA has emerged as a significant area of US-India collaboration while simultaneously becoming

an independent regional duty for India. India places a high priority on maintaining a robust Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) in the Indian Ocean. This includes managing non-traditional threats, facilitating continuous trade, and reducing a variety of maritime security concerns. India is becoming increasingly concerned about China's expanding influence in the Indian Ocean. The United States has stepped up its offer to India of both physical and technological support in the area of Missile Defense Architecture (MDA). The MDA faces a serious threat because of the inherent asymmetry of terrorism (Mishra, 2018b). Since the USS Cole incident in Yemen in 2000 and the subsequent countermeasures, maritime terrorism has become a real and present threat, so cooperative efforts to address modern security concerns in the Indian Ocean and the Indo-Pacific region must be given top priority.

Given that the 26/11 assaults in Mumbai took place close to the western Indian Ocean; they are considered a great tragedy for India. The policy of maritime domain awareness (MDA) in India is expanding rapidly, covering areas outside of its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). Thus, cooperation and support from important allies like the United States are required for this strategy to be implemented successfully. The US wants to work with India on the Missile Defense Agency (MDA), and Philip Davidson, the 25th commander of U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, has given a detailed explanation of this desire. India and the US have close defense relations that are only getting stronger. Their shared interests include disaster relief, counterterrorism, maritime domain awareness, and counterpiracy.

References

- Ben Dolven, B. V. (2020). *Indo-Pacific strategies of US allies and partners: Issues for Congress*. Congressional Research Service. <https://crsreports.congress.gov/product/pdf/R/R46217>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Bharti, M. S., & Singh, A. (2023). India and France bilateral partnership for advancing strategic autonomy in the Indo-Pacific region: Special reference to the Indo-French strategic partnership. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2023.2215561>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Clif, R. (2020). *A new US strategy for the Indo Pacific*. the National Bureau of Asian Research. <https://www.nbr.org/publication/a-new-u-s-strategy-for-the-indo-pacific/>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- E. Manyin, D. (2012). *Pivot to the Pacific? The Obama administration "Rebalancing" towards Asia*. Congressional Research Service. <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/natsec/R42448.pdf>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Flint, C., & Noorali, H. (2024). The relationality of geopolitical codes: the example of the Belt and Road Initiative. *Asian Geographer*, 41(1), 1–19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10225706.2023.2227618>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kim, J., & Min, J. (2020). The Trump Administration and 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific': Goals, Ways, and means as military strategy. *Pyeonghwahak Yeongu/Pyeonghwahag Yeon'gu*, 21(1), 59–79. <https://doi.org/10.14363/kaps.2020.21.1.59>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Heiduk, F., & Wacker, G. (2020). From Asia-Pacific to Indo-Pacific: significance, implementation and challenges. *Stiftung Wissenschaft Und Politik*, 43. <https://doi.org/10.18449/2020rpo9>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Jia, D. C. (2017). *New Trends of US Policy toward South Asia: Challenges to CPEC*. <http://142.54.178.187:9060/xmlui/handle/123456789/787>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Khan, N. S. H. a. M. (2018). US security strategy for Asia Pacific and India's role. *Strategic Studies*, 38(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.53532/ss.038.01.00158>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Konwer, S. (2023). Engagement sans commitment: a new phase of US-India relations. *The Round Table*, 112(6), 582–595. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00358533.2023.2286838>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Kronstadt, K. A. (2018). India-US relations issues for Congress. *Current Politics and Economics of South*, 119–177. [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Lai, D. (2013, May). Asia Pacific: Astrategic Assessment. *Strategic Study Institute*, 1–111. [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Lee, S., & Hwang, W. (2023). The United States and Asia in 2022. *Asian Survey*, 63(2), 311–323. <https://doi.org/10.1525/as.2023.63.2.311>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Paskal, C. (2021, March). Indo-Pacific strategies, perception and partnerships the view from seven countries. [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ramesh, A. (2024). One Steps Back. *A Triannual E-Journal on East Asian Bilateral Relations*, 3. [Google Scholar](#) [WorldCat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Rath, C. S. (2005). MARITIME STRATEGY OF INDIA AND CHINA: INFLUENCE OF ALFRED THAYER MAHAN. *Naval War College Journal*, 71–79. [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Ray, T. (2024). India-US Technology Ties: Charting an Ambitious Course for the Future. *Aligned but Autonomous*, 43. [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Saeed, M. (2017). From the Asia-Pacific to the Indo-Pacific: Expanding Sino-U.S. Strategic Competition. *China Quarterly of International Strategic Studies*, 03(04), 499–512. <https://doi.org/10.1142/s2377740017500324>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Saha, P. (2020, Feb 19). From 'Pivot to Asia' to Trump's ARIA: What drives the US' Current Asia policy? *ORF Occasional Paper*. https://www.orfonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ORF_OccasionalPaper_236_ARIA.pdf
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Singh, V. J. (2024). Advancing Defence Ties: Matching Expectations. *Aligned but Autonomous*, 51. [Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)
- Sinha, S. (2023). India's military modernisation: role and impact of France. *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs*, 10(3), 325–341. <https://doi.org/10.1177/23477970231207256>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)

Snyder, G. H. (2002). Mearsheimer's World-Offensive Realism and the Struggle for Security: A Review Essay. *International Security*, 27(1), 149-173.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/3092155>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)

Tehseen, M. (2017). Sino-US Competition: Implications for South Asia and the Asia-Pacific. *Strategic Studies*, 37(4), 1-17.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/48537569>
[Google Scholar](#) [Worldcat](#) [Fulltext](#)