

INDIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

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One of the key milestones in world history has been the rise to prominence of new and influential states in world affairs. The recent trajectories of China and India suggest strongly that these states will play a more powerful role in the world in the coming decades.¹ One recent analysis, for example, judges that “the likely emergence of China and India . . . as new global players—similar to the advent of a united Germany in the 19th century and a powerful United States in the early 20th century—will transform the geopolitical landscape, with impacts potentially as dramatic as those in the two previous centuries.”²

India’s rise, of course, has been heralded before—perhaps prematurely. However, its ascent now seems assured in light of changes in India’s economic and political mind-set, especially the advent of better economic policies and a diplo-

macy emphasizing realism. More fundamentally, India’s continued economic rise also is favored by the scale and intensity of globalization in the contemporary world.

India also is no longer geopolitically contained in South Asia, as it was in the Cold War, when its alignment with the Soviet Union caused the United States and China, with the help of Pakistan, to contain India. Finally, the sea change in Indian-U.S. relations, especially since 9/11, has made it easier for India to enter into close political and security cooperation with America’s friends and allies in the Asia-Pacific.³

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Much of the literature on India has focused on its recent economic vitality, especially its highly successful knowledge-based industrial sector. The nature and implications of India's strategic goals and behavior have received somewhat less attention.⁴ Those implications, however, will be felt globally—at the United Nations, in places as distant as Europe and Latin America, and within international economic institutions. It also will be manifest on the continent of Asia, from Afghanistan through Central Asia to Japan. Finally, and most of all, the rise of India will have consequences in the broad belt of nations from South Africa to Australia that constitute the Indian Ocean littoral and region.

For India, this maritime and southward focus is not entirely new.⁵ However, it has been increasing due to New Delhi's embrace of globalization and of the global marketplace, the advent of a new Indian self-confidence emphasizing security activism over continental self-defense, and the waning of the Pakistan problem as India's relative power has increased. Other, older, factors influencing this trend are similar to those that once conditioned British thinking about the defense of India: the natural protection afforded the subcontinent by the Himalayan mountain chain, and the problem confronting most would-be invaders of long lines of communications—the latter a factor that certainly impeded Japan's advance toward India in World War II.⁶

The December 2004 tsunami that devastated many of the coasts of the Indian Ocean (IO) turned the world's attention to a geographic zone that New Delhi increasingly sees as critically important and strategically challenging.⁷ The publication of India's new *Maritime Doctrine* is quite explicit on the central status of the Indian Ocean in Indian strategic thought and on India's determination to constitute the most important influence in the region as a whole. The appearance of this official paper complements a variety of actions by India that underscore New Delhi's ambitions and intent in the region.⁸

WHY THE OCEAN IS INDIAN

Why does New Delhi care about the Indian Ocean region? India is, after all, a large nation, a subcontinent in itself. Why is it driven to exercise itself in a larger arena, one larger in fact than the South Asian subregion?

The reality is that while India is a "continental" power, it occupies a central position in the IO region, a fact that will exercise an increasingly profound influence on—indeed almost determine—India's security environment. Writing in the 1940s, K. M. Pannikar argued that "while to other countries the Indian Ocean is only one of the important oceanic areas, to India it is a vital sea. Her lifelines are

concentrated in that area, her freedom is dependent on the freedom of that water surface. No industrial development, no commercial growth, no stable political structure is possible for her unless her shores are protected.”⁹ This was also emphasized in the most recent *Annual Report* of India’s Defence Ministry, which noted that “India is strategically located vis-à-vis both continental Asia as well as the Indian Ocean Region.”¹⁰

From New Delhi’s perspective, key security considerations include the accessibility of the Indian Ocean to the fleets of the world’s most powerful states; the large Islamic populations on the shores of the ocean and in its hinterland; the oil wealth of the Persian Gulf; the proliferation of conventional military power and nuclear weapons among the region’s states; the importance of key straits for India’s maritime security; and the historical tendency of continental Asian peoples or powers (the Indo-Aryans, the Mongols, Russia) to spill periodically out of Inner Asia in the direction of the Indian Ocean.¹¹ The position of India in this environment has sometimes been compared to that of Italy in the Mediterranean, only on an immense scale. To this list may be added the general consideration that, in the words of India’s navy chief, Indians “live in uncertain times and in a rough neighborhood. A scan of the littoral shows that, with the exception of a few countries, all others are afflicted with one or more of the ailments of poverty, backwardness, fundamentalism, terrorism or internal insurgency. A number of territorial and maritime disputes linger on. . . . Most of the conflicts since the end of the Cold War have also taken place in or around the [Indian Ocean region].”¹²

Confronted by this environment, India—like other states that are geographically large and also ambitious—believes that its security will be best guaranteed by enlarging its security perimeter and, specifically, achieving a position of influence in the larger region that encompasses the Indian Ocean. As one prominent American scholar recently noted, “Especially powerful states are strongly inclined to seek regional hegemony.”¹³

Unsurprisingly, New Delhi regards the Indian Ocean as its backyard and deems it both natural and desirable that India function as, eventually, the leader and the predominant influence in this region—the world’s only region and ocean named after a single state. This is what the United States set out to do in North America and the Western Hemisphere at an early stage in America’s “rise to power”: “American foreign policy throughout the nineteenth century had one overarching goal: achieving hegemony in the Western Hemisphere.”¹⁴ Similarly, in the expansive view of many Indians, India’s security perimeter should extend from the Strait of Malacca to the Strait of Hormuz and from the coast of Africa to the western shores of Australia. For some Indians, the emphasis is on the northern Indian Ocean, but for others the realm includes even the “Indian Ocean” coast of Antarctica.¹⁵



In this same vein, one—probably not atypical—Indian scholar judges that “a rising India will aspire to become the regional hegemon of South Asia and the Indian Ocean Region, and an extraregional power in the Middle East, Central Asia and Southeast Asia. *Ceteris paribus*, a rising India will try to establish regional hegemony just like all the other rising powers have since Napoleonic times, with the long term goal of achieving great power status on an Asian and perhaps even global scale.”¹⁶

India’s strategic elite, moreover, in some ways regards the nation as the heir of the British Raj, the power and influence of which in the nineteenth century often extended to the distant shores of the Indian Ocean, the “British Lake.” Writing about the hill station and summer capital of Simla in that period, historian James Morris has observed:

The world recognized that India was a great Power in itself. It was an Empire of its own, active and passive. Most of the bigger nations had their representatives at Simla,

and the little hill station on the ridge cast its summer shadow wide. Its writ ran to the Red Sea one way, the frontiers of Siam on the other. Aden, Perim, Socotra, Burma, Somaliland were all governed from India. Indian currency was the legal tender of Zanzibar and British East Africa; Indian mints coined the dollars of Singapore and Hong Kong.

It was from Simla, in the summer time, that the British supervised the eastern half of their Empire. Upon the power and wealth of India depended the security of the eastern trade, of Australia and New Zealand, of the great commercial enterprises of the Far East. The strength of India, so many strategists thought, alone prevented Russia from spilling through the Himalayan passes into Southeast Asia, and the preoccupations of generals in Simla were important to the whole world.¹⁷

Historian Ashley Jackson is even more explicit in highlighting the Indian dimension in all of this. He writes that

India under the Raj was a subimperial force autonomous of London whose weight was felt from the Swahili coast to the Persian Gulf and eastward to the Straits of Malacca. There was, in fact, an “Empire of the Raj” until at least the First World War, in which Indian foreign policy interests were powerfully expressed and represented in the Gulf and on the Arabian and Swahili coasts, often in conflict with other British imperial interests.¹⁸

Perhaps unsurprisingly, this imperial “Indian” posture in the Indian Ocean reflects the strategic vision of many influential Indians today.¹⁹

A second motive for India, and one obviously related to the foregoing, stems from anxiety about the role, or potential role, of external powers in the Indian Ocean. The late prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru summed up India’s concerns in this regard: “History has shown that whatever power controls the Indian Ocean has, in the first instance, India’s sea borne trade at her mercy and, in the second, India’s very independence itself.” This remains India’s view. The *Indian Maritime Doctrine* asserts: “All major powers of this century will seek a toehold in the Indian Ocean Region. Thus, Japan, the EU, and China, and a reinvigorated Russia can be expected to show presence in these waters either independently or through politico-security arrangements.” There is, moreover, “an increasing tendency of extra regional powers of military intervention in [IO] littoral countries to contain what they see as a conflict situation.”

India’s concern about external powers in the Indian Ocean mainly relates to China and the United States. The Sino-Indian relationship has improved since India’s war with China in 1962 and the Indian prime minister’s 1998 letter to the U.S. president justifying India’s nuclear tests in terms of the Chinese “threat.”²⁰ Most recently, the Chinese premier paid a state visit to India in April 2005, during which the two sides agreed to, among various other steps, the establishment

of a “Strategic and Cooperative Partnership for Peace and Prosperity.” Chinese and Indian naval units also exercised together for the first time in November 2005.

However, and notwithstanding the probably episodic progress registered of late, China and India likely will remain long-term rivals, vying for the same strategic space in Asia. Beijing, according to former Indian external affairs minister Jaswant Singh, is the “principal variable in the calculus of Indian foreign and defense policy.”²¹ In the words of one Indian scholar, China’s “rise will increasingly challenge Asian and global security. Just as India bore the brunt of the rise of international terrorism because of its geographical location, it will be frontally affected by the growing power of a next door . . . empire practicing classical balance-of-power politics.”²²

Another observer has recently judged that “there is no sign of China giving up its ‘contain India’ strategy which takes several forms: an unresolved territorial dispute; arms sales to and military alliances with ‘India-wary countries’ (Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma and now Nepal); nuclear and missile proliferation in India’s neighborhood (Pakistan, Iran and Saudi Arabia); and opposition to India’s membership in global and regional organizations.”²³ Most recently, India’s defense minister said in September 2005 that the Sino-Indian “situation *has not improved*. Massive preparations and deployments by China in the Tibetan and Sikkim border areas near Arunachal Pradesh and the Aksai Chin . . . has created an alarming situation.”²⁴

Narrowing its focus to the IO, India cannot help but be wary of the growing capability of China’s navy and of Beijing’s growing maritime presence.²⁵ In the Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea, especially, New Delhi is sensitive to a variety of Chinese naval or maritime activities that observers have characterized collectively as a “string of pearls” strategy or a “preparation of the battlefield.”²⁶ For Beijing, this process has entailed achieving the capability, and thereby the option, to deploy or station naval power in this region in the future. A key focus in this connection is Burma (Myanmar), where Chinese engineers and military personnel have long been engaged in airfield, road, railroad, pipeline, and port construction aimed at better connecting China with the Indian Ocean, both by sea and directly overland.

Some of this activity, moreover, spills over onto Burma’s offshore islands, including St. Matthews, near the mouth of the Malacca Strait, and the Coco Islands (Indian until their transfer to Burma in the 1950s), in the Bay of Bengal. On the latter, China is suspected of maintaining a communications monitoring facility that collects intelligence on Indian naval operations and missile testing. In addition to this “presence” in Burma, China is pursuing a variety of infrastructure links with Southeast Asia through the Greater Mekong Subregion program and is building container ports in Bangladesh at Chittagong, and in Sri

Lanka at Hambantota—directly astride the main east-west shipping route across the Indian Ocean. Elsewhere, and perhaps most ominously for India, China is constructing a large new naval base for Pakistan at Gwadar.²⁷

India also remains somewhat nervous about the large U.S. military presence in the Indian Ocean to India's west—in the Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. India's *Maritime Doctrine* observes that “the unfolding events consequent to the war in Afghanistan has brought the threats emanating on our Western shores into sharper focus. The growing US and western presence and deployment of naval forces, the battle for oil dominance and its control in the littoral and hinterland . . . are factors that are likely to have a long-term impact on the overall security environment in the [Indian Ocean region].” In similar fashion, the *2004–2005 Annual Report* of India's Defense Ministry states, “The Indian Navy maintained its personnel and equipment in a high state of combat preparedness due to the continued presence of multinational maritime forces in the Indian Ocean Region resulting in a fast pace of activities in the area.”²⁸

On the other hand, the continuing development of ties with the United States lately seems to have moderated Indian sensitivity to the U.S. presence in the Arabian Sea. In September and October 2005, for example, the two sides conducted their first naval maneuvers—MALABAR 05—employing U.S. and Indian aircraft carriers, and this occurred in the Arabian Sea. Many Indians, moreover, also recognize that because of Washington's desire to draw closer to India in response to overlapping “China” and “terrorism” concerns, the increased American role in the Indian Ocean region lately has increased India's “strategic space” and political-military relevance. Any decrease in the level of U.S. involvement in the region also would increase pressure here from China. Wariness about China also is a factor in recent Indian efforts to increase Japan's profile in the IO. This was most recently made manifest by the March 2005 Indo-Japanese agreement to develop jointly natural gas resources in the strategically sensitive Andaman Sea.²⁹ In any case, as one retired Indian diplomat recently commented, “asking outside powers to stay away is a pipe dream.”

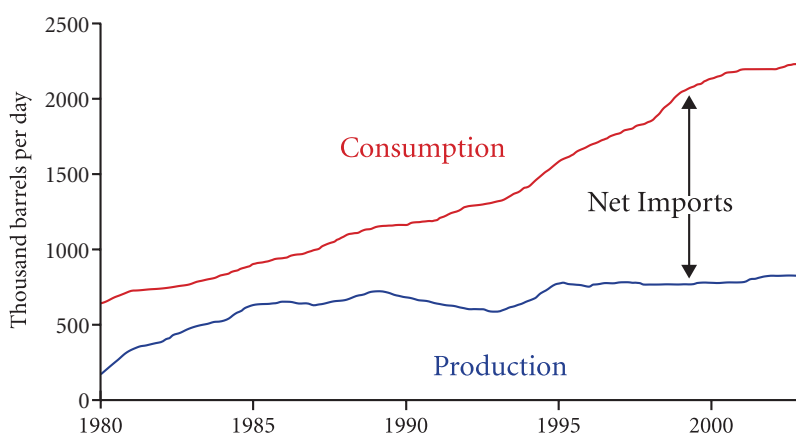
Of particular note, this last realization has led New Delhi to discard its traditional rhetoric about the Indian Ocean as a “zone of peace.” That language, along with “nonalignment” and a diplomatic approach marked by preachiness and a “moral” dimension, were the policies of an India that was weak. That India now belongs to history: “India has moved from its past emphasis on the power of the argument to a new stress on the argument of power.”³⁰

A third factor animating Indian interest in the Indian Ocean region is anxiety about the threat posed by Pakistan and, more broadly, Islam in a region that is home to much of the world's Muslim population. Formerly this may not have been an important consideration. Today, however, Islamic civilization often

finds itself at odds with the West and with largely Hindu India, and this conflict frequently will play out in the Indian Ocean region. India's *Maritime Doctrine*, for example, observed "the growing assertion of fundamentalist militancy fueled by jihadi fervor are factors that are likely to have a long-term impact on the overall security environment in the [Indian Ocean region]." In a similar vein, India's naval chief recently declared that the "epicenter of world terrorism lies in our [India's] immediate neighborhood."³¹ India, however, will approach these matters pragmatically, as illustrated by New Delhi's close ties with Iran.

A fourth motive for India in the Indian Ocean is energy. As the fourth-largest economy (in purchasing-power-parity terms) in the world, and one almost 70 percent dependent on foreign oil (the figure is expected to rise to 85 percent by 2020), India has an oil stake in the region that is significant and growing (see figure). Some Indian security analysts foresee energy security as India's primary strategic concern in the next twenty-five years and believe it must place itself on a virtual wartime footing to address it. India must protect its offshore oil and gas fields, ongoing deep-sea oil drilling projects in its vast exclusive economic zone, and an extensive infrastructure of shore and offshore oil and gas wells, pumping stations and telemetry posts, ports and pipeline grids, and refineries. Additionally, Indian public and private-sector oil companies have invested several billion dollars in recent years in oil concessions in foreign countries, many of them in the region, including Sudan, Yemen, Iran, Iraq, and Burma. These investments are perceived to need military protection.

INDIAN OIL PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION, 1980–2003



Source: U.S. Energy Dept., "International Petroleum Information," Energy Information Administration, www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/cabs/india.htm.

The foregoing considerations are the primary ones for India in the region. However, there also are important commercial reasons for New Delhi to pursue a robust Indian Ocean strategy. In the Indian view, "the maritime arc from the Gulf through the Straits of Malacca to the

Sea of Japan is the equivalent of the New Silk Route, and . . . total trade on this arc is U.S. \$1,800 billion." In addition, large numbers of overseas Indians live in the

region—3.5 million in the Gulf and Arab countries; they, and their remittances, constitute a factor in Indian security thinking.³²

In light of these interests, India is pursuing a variety of policies aimed at improving its strategic situation and at ensuring that its fears in the theater are not realized. To these ends, New Delhi is forging a web of partnerships with certain littoral states and major external powers, according to India's foreign secretary, to increase Indian influence in the region, acquire "more strategic space" and "strategic autonomy," and create a safety cushion for itself.³³ One observer states: "To spread its leverage, from Iran . . . to Myanmar and Vietnam, India is mixing innovative diplomatic cocktails that blend trade agreements, direct investment, military exercises, aid funds, energy cooperation and infrastructure-building."³⁴ In addition, India is developing more capable naval and air forces, and it is utilizing these forces increasingly to shape India's strategic environment.

THE U.S. RELATIONSHIP

India's pursuit of closer ties with its neighbors in the region and with key external actors in the region is not haphazard. Rather, and as one would expect, India is systematically targeting states that will bring India specific and tangible security and economic benefits.

The relationship with the United States is intended to enhance and magnify India's own power, and it constitutes perhaps the most important measure that is intended, *inter alia*, to promote the realization of India's agenda in the Indian Ocean. The United States, of course, is the key external actor in the IO and has a more significant military presence there—in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea, Pakistan, east and northeast Africa, Singapore, and Diego Garcia—than it did even a few years ago. Thus, America's raw power in the region has made it imperative that New Delhi, if it is to achieve its own regional goals, court the United States—at least for some time. The U.S. connection, of course, also promotes Indian goals unrelated to the Indian Ocean.

This developing relationship has been abetted by common concerns about international terrorism, religious extremism, and the rise of China. It also is a fundamental departure from the past pattern of Indian foreign policy. Since President William Clinton's visit to India in 2000 (the first visit by a president in decades) and, more recently, the realization by the George W. Bush administration of the importance of a rising India, as well as the 11 September 2001 terrorist attack on the United States, the two nations have embarked on a broad program of cooperation in a variety of fields, especially security. This cooperation has included Indian naval protection of U.S. shipping in the Malacca Strait in 2002, a close partnership in responding to the 2004 tsunami, combined military exercises, U.S. warship visits to India, a dialogue on missile defense,

American approval of India's acquisition of Israeli-built Phalcon airborne warning and control systems, and an offer to sell India a variety of military hardware, including fighter aircraft and P-3 maritime patrol planes.

Indo-U.S. ties recently have advanced with particular speed. In March 2005, notably, an American government spokesman stated that Washington's "goal is to help India become a major world power in the 21st century. We understand fully the implications, including military implications, of that statement."³⁵ This declaration was followed, in June 2005, by a bilateral accord, a ten-year "New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship," that strongly implies increasing levels of cooperation in defense trade, including coproduction of military equipment, cooperation on missile defense, the lifting of U.S. export controls on many sensitive military technologies, and joint monitoring and protection of critical sea lanes.³⁶

George Bush hosted a summit with Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July 2005, promising to strive for full civil nuclear cooperation with India. In effect, the president recognized India as a de facto, if not de jure, nuclear-weapon state and placed New Delhi on the same platform as other nuclear-weapon states. India, reciprocating, agreed to assume the same responsibilities and practices as any other country with advanced nuclear technology. These include separating military and civilian nuclear reactors and placing all civilian nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards; implementing the Additional Protocol (which supplements the foregoing safeguards) with respect to civilian nuclear facilities; continuing India's unilateral moratorium on nuclear testing; working with the United States for the implementation of a multilateral Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty; placing sensitive goods and technologies under export controls; and adhering to the Missile Technology Control Regime and to Nuclear Suppliers Group guidelines. The American and Indian delegations also agreed to further measures to combat terrorism and deepen bilateral economic relations through greater trade, investment, and technology collaboration. The United States and India also signed a Science and Technology Framework Agreement and agreed to build closer ties in space exploration, satellite navigation, and other areas in the commercial space arena.

Notwithstanding this dramatic advance in relations, which—assuming eventual congressional approval of implementing legislation—establishes a very close United States–India strategic relationship, some bilateral problems will persist. One is Pakistan.

The U.S. administration's policy now is to expand relations with both India and Pakistan but to do so along distinct tracks and in differentiated ways, one matching their respective geostrategic weights. From New Delhi's perspective, this is a distinct advance. Nonetheless, there will remain a residual Indian suspicion that any American efforts to assist Pakistan to become a successful

state will represent means, potential or actual, of limiting Indian power in South Asia and the Indian Ocean.³⁷ Such concerns have been diminishing; nonetheless, New Delhi will try to weaken or modify U.S. policies intended to strengthen United States–Pakistan ties, including continuing plans to sell the latter a large package of military equipment.³⁸

Other lingering problems in Indo-U.S. relations include New Delhi’s close ties to Iran, apparently continuing Indian reservations about the large U.S. military presence in Southwest Asia and the Persian Gulf, India’s pronounced emphasis on preserving its “strategic autonomy,” and a persistent disinclination on India’s part to ally itself with American purposes. In the latter regard, India, like China, Russia, and the European Union, will remain uncomfortable with a unipolar world and will do what it can to promote a multipolar order—in which it is one of the poles.³⁹ New Delhi, therefore, will need to proceed adeptly to ensure that ties with the United States continue to develop and expand in such a way that its own policies and ambitions in the Indian Ocean are buttressed and advanced.⁴⁰

TOWARD THE ARABIAN SEAS AND THE AFRICAN LITTORAL

In addition to the U.S. relationship, New Delhi is seeking to increase India’s profile almost omnidirectionally from India’s shores. These efforts are intended to advance broad economic or security interests, including the “security” of the various “gates” to the Indian Ocean, and to cultivate ties with the nations adjacent to these choke points: the Strait of Hormuz (Iran), the Bab el Mandeb (Djibouti and Eritrea), the Cape of Good Hope and the Mozambique Channel (South Africa and Mozambique), and the Singapore and Malacca straits (Singapore and Thailand), among others. Certain Indian strategic and diplomatic initiatives also are aimed at gaining partners or client states once having strong ties with colonial or precolonial India.⁴¹

As noted above, India’s *Maritime Doctrine* underscores the importance of the Arabian Sea region in the Indian view and highlights a growing attentiveness to challenges and opportunities arising there. Efforts by New Delhi to advance the Indian cause to its “near West” and in the “Arabian Seas” subregion have focused mainly on Pakistan, Iran, Israel, and several African states.

Indo-Pakistani relations have improved since early 2003, when Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee extended a “hand of friendship” to Pakistan; in January 2004, the two sides launched a peace process. India’s aims in the current diplomatic interchange are to lessen the likelihood of an Indo-Pakistani military conflict, reduce pressure in Kashmir, and—especially—increase India’s freedom to pursue great-power status and to maneuver elsewhere in South Asia, the region, and the world.

India does not expect an end, for a very long time at best, to difficulties in its relations with Pakistan. It is hoping, however, to manipulate the relationship in a manner that will leave India stronger and Pakistan weaker at the end of the day. As India is inherently the stronger party, any “closer” relationship between India and Pakistan will, in the long run, increase Indian leverage with respect to Pakistan and decrease Islamabad’s ability to disregard Indian interests. As one Indian observer recently said, “India’s long-term interest lies in changing Pakistan’s behavior.”⁴² The termination of support for perceived anti-Indian terrorism and more restraint in Islamabad’s embrace of China, and eventually even the United States, are among India’s goals.

Elsewhere in the Arabian Sea, India already has enjoyed considerable success in wooing Iran. That state, with its Islamic government, seems a strange partner for democratic India, but the two lands have long influenced each other in culture, language, and other fields, especially when the Mughals ruled India. India and Iran also shared a border until 1947. Iran sees India as a strong partner that will help Tehran avoid strategic isolation. In addition, economic cooperation with New Delhi (and Beijing) dovetails with Iran’s own policy of shifting its oil and gas trade to the Asian region so as to reduce its market dependence on the West. For India, the relationship is part of a broader long-term effort, involving various diplomatic and other measures in Afghanistan and Central Asia, to encircle and contain Pakistan.

Obviously, New Delhi also regards the Iranian connection as helping with its own energy needs. Deepening ties have been reflected in the growth of trade and particularly in a January 2005 deal with the National Iranian Oil Company to import five million tons of liquefied gas annually for twenty-five years. An Indian company will get a 20 percent share in the development of Iran’s biggest on-shore oil field, Yadavaran, which is operated by China’s state oil company, as well as 100 percent rights in the Juefeir oil field. India and Iran also have been cooperating on the North-South Transportation Corridor, a project to link Mumbai—via Bandar Abbas—with Europe. There also is discussion of the development of a land corridor that would allow goods to move from India’s Punjab through Pakistan, Iran, and Azerbaijan, then on to Europe.⁴³ India and Iran also have been pursuing an ambitious project to build a 2,700-kilometer pipeline from Iran through Pakistan to India that would allow New Delhi to import liquefied natural gas. If finalized soon, the pipeline would be operational by 2010.⁴⁴ (The United States has warned India and Pakistan that the project could violate the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996.)⁴⁵

Security ties with Iran have been advancing as well. The parties have forged an accord that gives Iran some access to Indian military technology. There are reports—officially denied—that it also gives India access to Iranian military

bases in the event of war with Pakistan. Other recent developments include the first Indo-Iranian combined naval exercises and an Indian effort to upgrade the Iranian port of Chahbahar, a move that could foreshadow its use eventually by the Indian Navy. This latter initiative presumably also responds to China's development, noted above, of a Pakistani port and naval base at Gwadar, a hundred miles east of Chahbahar.⁴⁶

The Indo-Iranian relationship is not without problems. Iran, of course, has never been happy about India's close ties with Israel. Most recently, Iran also was angered by a 24 September 2005 vote cast by India in support of an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) resolution that potentially refers the Iranian nuclear weapons issue to the United Nations Security Council. The IAEA vote—passed despite one “no” vote and abstentions from Russia, China, and Pakistan, among others—follows several earlier hostile comments from India on the Iranian nuclear issue, including one calling on Tehran to “honor the obligations and agreements to which it is a party.”⁴⁷

The Indian vote was a blow to New Delhi's relations with Tehran. However, while it may augur a more circumscribed future for this connection, it is more likely that the long-term effects of India's vote will be limited. The bilateral relationship is too important for both parties, and New Delhi and Tehran will do their best to ensure that ties remain on an even keel.⁴⁸

India, however, recently has tried to reduce its vulnerabilities in the oil-rich but unstable Persian Gulf by moving beyond Iran and attempting to cultivate a broader and more diverse set of relationships there. The most significant recent development has been the new warmth in New Delhi's ties with Saudi Arabia, Iran's traditional foe in the Gulf and India's largest source of petroleum imports. Reflecting the change in the temper of Indo-Saudi ties, the new Saudi king was scheduled to be the main guest in New Delhi at the January 2006 Republic Day celebration. This is a measure of the importance India attaches to its developing connection to Riyadh and an initiative undoubtedly noticed by the leadership in Iran.

Moving farther westward, another key nexus is with Israel. While formal diplomatic ties date only from 1992, the two states have had important connections at least since the early 1980s. In recent years, numerous senior Israeli and Indian officials have exchanged visits, and military relations have become so close as to be tantamount to a military alliance. In 2003, following Pakistan's shoot-down of an “Indian” unmanned aircraft manufactured (and perhaps operated) by Israel, President Pervez Musharraf complained “that the cooperation between India and Israel not only relates to Pakistan, but the Middle East region as a whole.” Israel is now India's second-largest arms supplier after Russia, and India is Israel's largest defense market and second-largest Asian trading partner (after Japan).⁴⁹ According to one estimate, India will purchase some fifteen billion dollars'

worth of Israeli arms over the next few years.⁵⁰ The two sides recently agreed to a combined air exercise pitting Israeli F-16s against Indian Su-30MKIs (an advanced derivative of the Soviet Su-27 Flanker).⁵¹

Israel possesses an Indian Ocean footprint that apparently encompasses the Bab-el-Mandeb, the southern entrance to the Red Sea and a key choke point, and probably points beyond.⁵² India's aim here is to link itself with another powerful state whose sphere thus intersects its own. At the same time, New Delhi also seeks the advanced military equipment, training, and other help—probably including technology and advice on nuclear weapons and missiles—that Israel can sell or provide. The official publication of the Chinese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *World Affairs*, claims that India is acquiring technology from Israel for its Agni-III missile as well as for a miniature nuclear warhead—which India would need were it to deploy a sea-based (i.e., Indian Ocean-based) strategic nuclear deterrent.

Elsewhere in the western Indian Ocean, India forged its first military relationship with a Gulf state in 2002 when New Delhi and Oman agreed to hold regular combined exercises and cooperate in training and defense production. They also initiated a regular strategic dialogue and, in 2003, signed a defense cooperation pact. The pact provides for the export and import of weapons, military training, and coordination of security-related issues. India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) also have signed a Framework Agreement for Economic Cooperation and have begun negotiations on a free trade pact. New Delhi's connections with Oman and the five other GCC states, however, still are relatively undeveloped. As one Indian observer noted recently, "With our growing dependence on imported oil and gas, stability in this region is crucial for our welfare and well-being. Around 3.7 million Indian nationals live in the six GCC countries. They remit around \$8 billion annually. . . . The time has, perhaps, come for us to fashion a new and more proactive 'Look West' policy to deal with the challenges that we now face to our west."⁵³ A month earlier, India's commerce minister offered the same view: "India has successfully pursued a 'look-east' policy to come closer to countries in Southeast Asia. We must similarly come closer to our western neighbors in the Gulf."⁵⁴

Farther afield, India's ties with the states of Africa's Indian Ocean coast still are limited but are expanding. Reminiscent of India's precolonial relationship with coastal Africa, New Delhi's key connections today are with some of the states in the Horn of Africa, South Africa, Tanzania, Mozambique, and especially the so-called African Islands, including Mauritius and the Seychelles. In the Horn, India is providing the force commander and the largest contingent of troops in the UN mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea. India also just concluded significant naval maneuvers in the Gulf of Aden, featuring drills with allied Task Force Horn of Africa units and a port call in Djibouti.

At the other end of the continent, a noteworthy connection is developing with South Africa, through bilateral arrangements and a trilateral (India–Brazil–South Africa) relationship. Developments in the security arena are striking and were underscored in late 2004 when the Indian Air Force conducted a combined air-defense exercise with its South African counterpart (and with participating American, German, and British elements)—the first combined air exercise ever conducted by India on the African continent. The participating Indian Mirage 2000 fighters deployed from north central India and flew—with help from newly acquired Il-78 aerial tankers—to South Africa via Mauritius.⁵⁵ India and South Africa conducted combined naval drills off the African coast even more recently, in June 2005.

A visit by India's president to Tanzania in 2004 led to an agreement for increased training of Tanzanian military personnel in India and more frequent calls by Indian warships at Tanzanian ports.⁵⁶ Farther south, Mozambique and India recently agreed to continue the joint patrols off the Mozambican coast begun during the African Union summit in Maputo in 2003. The governments also have begun to negotiate a defense agreement. New Delhi's links with the African Islands also are deepening. Since early 2003, India has been patrolling the exclusive economic zone of Mauritius, and it is negotiating a "comprehensive economic cooperation and partnership" agreement with what an Indian spokesperson calls this "gateway to the African continent."⁵⁷ In an April 2005 state visit, the Indian prime minister also reiterated India's commitment to "the defense, security and sovereignty of Mauritius." India also has initialed a memorandum of understanding with the Seychelles on defense cooperation: patrols of that nation's territorial waters, training of Seychelles military personnel, and—in early 2005—Indian donation of a patrol vessel to help with coastal defense. India, finally, has been very active in forging a close relationship with the Maldives, a connection undoubtedly reinforced by India's considerable material and other assistance in the aftermath of the December 2004 tsunami.

These island-nation initiatives were strengthened in September 2005 by the creation of a new defense ministry office headed by a two-star admiral charged with assisting such states. According to the Indian naval chief, these are "vital to India" and "friendly and well disposed," but their security remains fragile, and therefore India cannot afford to see any hostile or inimical power threaten them.⁵⁸

IN THE BAY OF BENGAL AND "FURTHER INDIA"

Complementing its westward orientation, India also has been diligent in cultivating closer relations with a variety of states in the Bay of Bengal and in Southeast Asia, often under the aegis of New Delhi's "Look East" policy.⁵⁹ That approach, initiated in the early 1990s against the backdrop of a struggling Indian



economy and the sudden disappearance of the Cold War framework, has been a stunning diplomatic success. As a consequence, India's ties with most of the states of the Bay of Bengal and Southeast Asia, except possibly Bangladesh, are better than they were only a few years ago.

India has built a strong relationship with its immediate neighbor to the south, Sri Lanka. "India and Sri Lanka have forged new, close bonds. There is a new respect for India," according to one Sri Lankan observer.⁶⁰ This "respect," moreover, is sometimes reflected in reluctance in Colombo to challenge New Delhi, even on issues, such as the Sethusamudram Canal project, that could adversely affect important Sri

Lankan interests. The Indo–Sri Lankan connection was solidified most recently by disaster relief in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami, but a string of developments had already promoted close relations. A free trade agreement that came into force in 2000 has doubled bilateral commerce and increased significantly India's share of Sri Lanka's trade. In addition, the two neighbors are moving steadily toward a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA). A defense cooperation agreement will soon expand Indian training programs for Sri Lankan troops, strengthen intelligence sharing, supply defense equipment (including transport helicopters) to Colombo, and refit a Sri Lankan warship. These states' first combined military exercise, EKSATH, took place in December 2004 and involved the Indian Coast Guard and Sri Lankan Navy. (New Delhi, however, has apparently rejected a Sri Lankan request for combined naval patrols against the Tamil "Sea Tigers.")⁶¹

A memorandum provides for Indian help in reconstructing the vital Palaly airstrip on the Jaffna Peninsula in northern Sri Lanka. Colombo has rebuffed an Indian request that the field be reserved for use solely by Sri Lanka and India; however, taken in conjunction with a recent maritime surveillance pact, the accord could imply Indian utilization of that base eventually.⁶² New Delhi also has agreed to build a modern highway between Trincomalee, a Sinhalese pocket in the Tamil north and east, and Anuradhapura, in the Sinhalese heartland. It will be named after former Indian prime minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was killed by a suicide bomber of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in 1991. India likely also is contemplating the possibility of eventually using Trincomalee's legendary harbor. In a quiet deal in 2002, the Lanka Indian Oil Corporation, a wholly owned Indian government subsidiary in Sri Lanka, was granted a thirty-five-year lease of the China Bay tank farm at Trincomalee as part of its plan to develop petroleum storage there. Also suggestive of wider Indian aims is the possible construction of a Trincomalee offshoot of the proposed pipeline between the southern Indian cities of Chennai and Madurai and Sri Lanka's capital, Colombo.

Another of India's immediate neighbors is Bangladesh. The relationship has long been strained by such issues as illegal Bangladeshi migration, trade, and water use (notably New Delhi's "River-Linking Project"), but some improvement may be under way. Agreement by India and Bangladesh in January 2005 to move forward with an "Eastern Corridor Pipeline" to bring gas from Burmese fields through Bangladesh to India now appears to have been shelved. Notwithstanding this setback, Indian prime minister Manmohan Singh visited Dhaka in conjunction with the thirteenth summit of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation in November 2005 and has invited Bangladeshi prime minister Khaleda Zia to visit India. One Bangladesh newspaper observed that "an improvement in the bilateral ties is seemingly an important foreign policy . . . [goal] that New Delhi wishes to achieve. . . . If India could put confidence building measures in place with Pakistan, its nuclear rival, we see no reason why Bangladesh's outstanding problems with India cannot be put behind."⁶³

The "Look East" policy also has produced gains with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). India became a sectoral partner in 1991, a full dialogue partner in 1995, and a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum in 1996. In late 2004 India and ten ASEAN countries—meeting at the tenth summit in Vientiane—signed a historic pact for peace, progress, and shared prosperity. They also pledged to cooperate in fighting international terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The four-page accord and nine-page action plan envisage cooperation in multilateral fora, particularly the World Trade Organization; in addressing the challenges of economic, food,

human, and energy security; and in boosting trade, investment, tourism, culture, sports, and people-to-people contacts. The pact commits India to creating a free trade area by 2011 with Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore, and by 2016 with the rest of ASEAN—the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Burma, and Vietnam.

Within ASEAN, India has focused particularly on developing close ties with Burma, Singapore, and, most recently, Thailand. Progress with Burma has been significant since New Delhi began to engage that nation about a decade ago, partly from concern about Chinese influence there. The emphasis now, however, is not mainly defensive but reflects India's regional ambitions, desire to use Rangoon from which to compete with China farther afield in Southeast Asia (including the South China Sea), and interest in Burmese energy resources, as well as its need to consolidate control in its own remote northeastern provinces. Most recently, India's position in Burma was strengthened when strongman Khin Nyunt, known for pro-China inclinations, was deposed in October 2004 and placed under house arrest. Less than a week later, Than Shwe, head of Burma's ruling military junta, visited India and signed three agreements, including a "Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues." The general also assured New Delhi that Burma would not permit its territory to be used by any hostile element to harm Indian interests. Soon thereafter, India and Burma launched coordinated military operations against Manipuri and Naga rebels along the frontier.⁶⁴

Indo-Burmese ties also are advanced by both countries' membership in the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC), the first setting in which two ASEAN members have come together with three countries in South Asia for economic cooperation. Significantly, neither China nor Pakistan is part of this grouping. These steps and others—resumption of arms shipments to Burma, New Delhi's acquisition of an equity stake in a natural gas field off Burma's coast, the proposed India-Burma Gas Pipeline, the reopening of the Indian and Burmese consulates in Mandalay and Kolkata, and a recent India-Burma naval exercise—all reflect a significant deepening in Indo-Burmese relations in recent years.

Burma ties as well into larger Indian agendas, to which eastward transportation is vital. New Delhi is building a road—the India-Myanmar-Thailand trilateral highway, a portion of the projected Asian Highway—connecting Calcutta via Burma with Bangkok. India also is building roads to connect Mizoram with Mandalay and has extended a fifty-six-million-dollar line of credit to Burma to modernize the Mandalay-Rangoon railroad.⁶⁵ New Delhi is likely also to carry out port and transportation improvements at the mouth of the Kaladan River (the Kaladan Multi-modal Transport Project) in western Burma, opening trade

opportunities with Burma and Thailand and expanding access to India's northeast. In addition, New Delhi has begun to study the feasibility of building a deep-water seaport at Dawei (Tavoy), on the Burmese coast, possibly allowing access from the Middle East, Europe, and Africa to East Asian markets without transiting the Malacca Straits. Taken together, these eastward transportation plans will give India an alternative route to the Malacca Straits subregion as well as land access to the South China Sea. They reflect a land-sea strategy for projecting Indian influence to the east—a strategy intended to counter China's strategic ambitions in Southeast Asia and toward the Indian Ocean.

India's perceived need to compete with China in Southeast Asia, particularly in its littoral nations, has helped produce a courtship of Singapore. It also underscores the importance India attaches to key choke points—that it may need to block a Chinese move toward or into the Indian Ocean (the principal mission of the Indian bases in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands). Singapore is ideally situated to supplement the infrastructure in the Andamans; facilities there could, by the same token, allow India to project power into the South China Sea and against China. The Singapore relationship is modest but deepening. Trade has been growing rapidly, surging by nearly 50 percent in 2004; a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement in June 2005 should boost trade further. In addition, a security pact in 2003 extended an existing program of combined naval exercises to encompass air and ground maneuvers and initiated a high-level security dialogue and intelligence exchange. Singapore and India held their first air exercise late in 2004 and their first ground exercises from February to April 2005, in India.⁶⁶ Notably, in February and March 2005 their annual naval maneuvers took place for the first time in the South China Sea (vice "Indian" waters). New Delhi also has stated willingness—in principle—to allow the Singapore Air Force to use Indian ranges on an extended basis.

The developing Indian relationship with Thailand, finally, is a recent one and has been fed by, among other factors, Bangkok's growing concern with Islamic militants in Thailand's south: "The Thais know they are in a difficult situation and are looking left, right and center to see who is in the game on their side." A team of Indian intelligence officials visited Bangkok in November 2004; Thailand's National Security Council chief reciprocated the following month. In addition, India's military has been coordinating closely with Thailand's navy and coast guard in and near the Malacca Strait, signing a memorandum of understanding in May 2005. Thailand also has been cooperating more than previously on matters related to the various insurgencies in India's northeast.⁶⁷ More broadly, Bangkok welcomes the "rise of India," given Thailand's historical preference that no single power—not Britain or France in the nineteenth century, and not China today—achieve hegemony in its neighborhood. In any case, says

one Thai pundit, “Our ancestors taught us to enjoy noodles as well as curry dishes.”⁶⁸ To this end, Bangkok is pursuing what it calls a “Look West” policy, and Thai officials have welcomed the Indian efforts to cultivate influence—potentially at China’s expense—in Burma.

STRENGTHENING AND USING INDIA’S ARMED FORCES

Supplementing its diplomatic and political initiatives, India is shaping its growing military capability. These forces should be able, should the need arise, to: keep China’s navy out of the Indian Ocean; enter the South China Sea and project military power directly against the Chinese homeland; project military power elsewhere in the Indian Ocean—at key choke points, on vital islands, around the littoral, and along key sea routes; and—in a presumably altered strategic environment—pose an important potential constraint on the ability of the U.S. Navy to operate in the IO. At present, the overall thrust is to get weapons to project power, especially systems with greater lethality and reach. To this end, India ordered \$5.7 billion in weapons in 2004, overtaking China and Saudi Arabia and becoming the developing world’s leading weapons buyer. Likewise, India stands as the developing world’s biggest arms buyer for the eight-year period up to 2004.⁶⁹ The drive toward improved military capabilities is reflected in a variety of ongoing developments.⁷⁰

The most significant development will be a strengthened nuclear-weapon strike capability relevant to the Indian Ocean as a whole. While land-based missiles may yet assume significance in this regard, New Delhi mainly is focused on equipping its navy and air force with nuclear capabilities that could be employed in a contingency.

India’s intention to add a sea-based leg to its nuclear posture is longstanding and was a prominent feature of the Draft Nuclear Doctrine promulgated by India’s National Security Advisory Board in 1999. The Cabinet Committee on Security also implicitly endorsed this goal in its 2003 restatement of many of the Doctrine’s key points. Most recently, the new *Indian Maritime Doctrine* and the naval service chief, Admiral Arun Prakash, affirmed in September 2005 the importance of a sea-based leg.⁷¹

Indian Airpower

Another key development is the acquisition of an air force with longer range. A critical advance was the purchase in 2003 of Il-78 aerial tanker aircraft, New Delhi’s first of the type. These tankers have supported the deployment of fighter and transport aircraft to a variety of far-flung locations, including South Africa and Alaska. Refueling also has recently allowed nonstop flights of Su-30s from Pune, their main operating base southeast of Mumbai, to Car Nicobar in the Bay

of Bengal, a potential staging location adjacent to the Strait of Malacca and the South China Sea approaches to China's populous heartland. A second airpower force multiplier will be the acquisition in 2007 of three Phalcon airborne warning and control system (AWACS) aircraft. These AWACS platforms, designed for 360-degree surveillance out to 350 nautical miles, will detect aerial threats and direct strike aircraft to targets. Like the tankers, the AWACS will not have a mainly passive, defensive role; rather, they will allow other air assets to strike targets at greater distances and with much more effect. New Delhi also is developing an indigenous AWACS system, to be deployed by 2011. In addition, India's Tu-142M and Il-38 maritime surveillance/antisubmarine warfare aircraft all are receiving upgrades. Finally, the Navy is raising three squadrons of Israeli-built Heron II unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and probably will acquire P-3C Orions from the United States.⁷²

India's air force also will achieve greater range and lethality with the acquisition of a variety of new combat aircraft—many of them clearly intended for strategic strike operations. In this regard, the planned acquisition of 190 long-range and air-refuelable Su-30 fighters (140 of which will be built from kits in India) through 2018 is particularly striking. New Delhi also has begun upgrading its fleet of Jaguar aircraft. The package—an almost definitive sign that these aircraft will continue to have a nuclear strike mission—includes more modern navigation systems, new electronic countermeasures gear, and new armament pods.⁷³ As these aircraft are capable of air-to-air refueling, the Il-78s significantly enhanced their radius of action. New Delhi also has ordered additional Jaguars (seventeen two-seat and twenty single-seat) from Hindustan Aeronautics Limited.

In addition, India plans to get 126 new multirole combat aircraft from a foreign supplier, either Lockheed Martin (the F-16), Boeing/McDonnell-Douglas (F-18 Hornet), Russia (MiG-35), Dassault Aviation of France (Mirage 2000-5), or Gripen of Sweden. Some of these airframes will be assembled in India. If Moscow and New Delhi can come to terms, at least four Tu-22M3s may be leased from Russia. These Backfires have a range of almost seven thousand nautical miles and can carry a payload of about twenty-five tons—the equivalent of two dozen two-thousand-pound bombs, or a large number of standoff air-to-ground missiles. India and Russia also are discussing the development and coproduction of a fifth-generation fighter aircraft.

Many of these strike platforms will be equipped eventually with powerful, long-range cruise missiles. The joint Indo-Russian Brahmos, with a 290-kilometer range and supersonic speed, will be deployed first on Indian warships, but an aerial version is planned. As one observer comments, "India's co-development with Russia of the Brahmos missile for India's air (and naval) forces introduces . . . a

highly lethal, hybrid (cruise plus ballistic) missile that is most likely to be used as a conventional counterforce weapon against naval ships, ordnance storage facilities, sensitive military production facilities, aircraft hangars, military communication nodes and command and control centers.⁷⁴

A final aviation-related development, one reflecting the new over-the-horizon focus of the Indian Air Force, is the expected formation—with Israeli help—of an aerospace command that will feature a ground-based imagery center, intended to leverage India's growing space "footprint" for air force and missile targeting and battlespace management.⁷⁵ The new command will be linked to a military reconnaissance satellite system, expected to be operational by 2007.⁷⁶

Indian Seapower

India's surface navy is to become more capable and lethal than today. India's first naval buildup occurred in the 1960s; there followed a period of robust growth in the mid-1980s. The latter expansion, marked by a focus on power projection, grew out of a perception of threat from the U.S. Navy, which was increasing its presence in the Indian Ocean. Prime Minister Indira Gandhi warned, "The ocean has brought conquerors to India in the past. Today we find it churning with danger."⁷⁷ However, between 1988 and 1995 a retrenchment occurred, due to the disintegration of the USSR, a financial crisis in India (and East Asia), demands for social investment, and a virtually worldwide deemphasis on military expenditures; the Indian Navy did not acquire a single principal surface combatant, either from abroad or from domestic shipyards.⁷⁸ The environment had changed again by the mid-1990s—as the international situation grew darker and the Indian economy strengthened—and the prospect is now for a navy that, if still modest in size, about forty principal combatants, will be significantly improved in quality.

The surface navy currently consists primarily of a single vintage aircraft carrier, three new and five older destroyers, four new and seven vintage frigates, three new tank landing ships (LSTs), and assorted corvettes and patrol craft. Within five years, this force likely will comprise instead two new (that is, to India) aircraft carriers, six new and only a few vintage destroyers, twelve new and a few older frigates, corvettes and patrol craft, five new LSTs, and a refurbished seventeen-thousand-ton ex-U.S. landing platform dock. All of the new warships, including the projected two aircraft carriers, will be much more formidable than their respective predecessors. For example, the Type 15A frigates now under construction in Mumbai will be equipped with sixteen vertical-launch Brahmos cruise missiles. In addition, some warships are likely to be equipped eventually with U.S.-supplied Aegis radar systems.⁷⁹

The carriers are particularly suited and intended for force projection. Moreover, with their aircraft and other weapons, they will constitute a quantum

advance over the present carrier, INS *Viraat*, which is scheduled for decommissioning in 2010. One of the future carriers will be the 44,500-ton Soviet-built *Admiral Gorshkov*, now INS *Vikramaditya*, to be delivered in 2008. The refitted ship will carry at least sixteen MiG-29Ks and six to eight Ka-31 antisubmarine and airborne-early-warning helicopters. India also has the option of acquiring, at current prices for up to five years, another thirty MiG-29Ks—a substantial increase in capability over the Harriers currently on the *Viraat*. Also, *Vikramaditya*'s range of nearly fourteen thousand nautical miles—vice the five thousand of *Viraat*—should represent a massive boost in reach.

The other new aircraft carrier will be indigenously constructed, India's first; it was laid down in April 2005. The forty-thousand-ton vessel, designated an Air Defense Ship (ADS), is designed for a complement of fourteen to sixteen MiG-29K aircraft and around twenty utility, antisubmarine, and antisurface helicopters. This will potentially equip the navy with two aircraft carriers by about 2010 (*Vikramaditya* and the ADS), thus allowing the service to maintain a strong presence along both the eastern and western shores. Indian naval leaders, however, envisage the navy as a three-carrier force—one on each coast and one in reserve—by 2015–20.

India continues to upgrade its existing submarine fleet while also developing or acquiring newer, more advanced boats. Many of these submarines are being fitted with cruise missiles with land-attack capabilities, reflecting the service's emphasis on littoral warfare. Over time, these cruise missiles almost certainly will be armed with nuclear warheads.

The Indian Navy's principal subsurface combatants currently are four German Type 1500 and ten Russian-produced Kilo submarines. The Kilos are undergoing refits in Russia, including the addition of Klub cruise missiles, believed to have both antiship and land-attack capabilities at ranges up to two hundred kilometers. The five boats already refitted with these weapons constitute the first Indian submerged missile launch capability. New Delhi is similarly upgrading one of its Type 1500s. The Indian government also recently authorized the purchase of six French-designed *Scorpene* submarines, with the option of acquiring four more. The first three boats will be conventional diesel-electric submarines, with subsequent ones incorporating air-independent propulsion. The design reportedly allows for the installation of a small nuclear reactor. The *Scorpene* contract apparently also provides for Indian acquisition of critical underwater missile-launch technology.⁸⁰ Other expected Indian submarine acquisitions include four to six Amur 1650 hunter-killer boats (SSKs) and two each of the more advanced versions of the Kilo and *Shishumar* submarines.

India also has lately accorded higher priority to the construction of an indigenous nuclear-powered missile submarine, the Advanced Technology Vessel.

Fabrication of the hull and integration (with Russia's assistance) of the nuclear reactor could already be under way. In the long run, its main armament will be nuclear-armed cruise missiles. Finally, New Delhi seems likely to lease from Russia two Akula II nuclear-powered attack submarines. Reportedly, Indian naval officers will begin training for these submarines at a newly built center near St. Petersburg in September 2005.⁸¹ These boats are normally configured with intermediate-range cruise missiles capable of mounting two-hundred-kiloton nuclear warheads, but India is expected instead to use the Brahmos cruise missile—eventually with a nuclear warhead—as their principal weapon.

Basing and Presence Ashore

A better network of forward military bases is in prospect. One of the most important of its elements is INS (Indian Naval Station) Kadamba, a naval and naval air base—slated to be Asia's largest—under construction at Karwar (near Goa) on the Malabar Coast and recently inaugurated by Defense Minister Pranab Mukherjee. More centrally located with respect to the Indian Ocean than Mumbai, the site of India's longtime Arabian Sea naval complex, this facility will be India's first exclusive naval base (others are colocated with commercial and civilian ports). INS Kadamba will be able to receive India's new aircraft carriers; it is to become the home of several naval units beginning late in 2005 and, ultimately, of the headquarters of India's Western Naval Command. It will reportedly serve as the principal base for the nuclear submarines that the Indian Navy is to lease from Russia and some that it will build indigenously. The construction of a naval air station will begin this year.

Farther south, India has been enhancing the infrastructure at Kochi (Cochin) in Kerala, where India's first full-fledged base for unmanned aerial vehicles recently was established. The UAVs are providing the Navy a real-time view of the busy sea-lanes from the northern Arabian Sea to the Malacca Strait. As Kochi also is India's key center for antisubmarine warfare, the UAVs almost certainly also are employed for that purpose. One observer, commenting on the strategic significance of this site, notes that "its situation, close to the southern tip of India's west coast and the central Indian Ocean, makes Cochin more than any other base a regional guard (see, for example, its proximity to the Maldives and the rich fishing grounds off India's west coast); a challenge to the United States in Diego Garcia [*sic*]; and the terminus of the trans-oceanic link with Antarctica."⁸² In addition to Kochi, the Indian Navy is establishing UAV bases at Port Blair, the site of India's Andaman and Nicobar Command, and in the Lakshadweep Islands.⁸³ The latter archipelago, off India's west coast in the Arabian Sea, is a key choke point between the Persian Gulf and the Malacca Strait that has until now received little attention from military planners.

New Delhi sees as even more strategically significant the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. It was to strengthen India's military presence in the Bay of Bengal that the unified Andaman and Nicobar Command was established in 2001. The islands had been recognized by the British as early as the 1780s as dominating one of the key gateways to the Indian Ocean.⁸⁴ One analyst, writing from Port Blair, has claimed that "India was double-minded about retaining the islands until the 1998 Pokhran nuclear tests. Top officials say the original plan was to abandon the Andaman and Nicobar Islands after exploiting its natural resources." India, for example, transferred the Coco Islands to Burma in 1954.⁸⁵ However, by 1962—in the aftermath of the war with China—New Delhi clearly was becoming sensitive to the archipelago's value, and in 1998 or before "the Vajpayee government woke up to the islands' huge strategic importance."⁸⁶

Whether or not India ever doubted its worth, the archipelago likely will have importance in the future—notwithstanding damage to infrastructure from the recent tsunami. India's navy chief has stated that "this theater will steadily gain importance . . . in the coming years."⁸⁷ Another Indian has characterized the new Andaman and Nicobar command as "India's ticket to strategic relevance" and "India's Diego Garcia."⁸⁸ In this connection, New Delhi almost certainly intends to use the islands as forward bases for cruise-missile-launching submarines, eventually with nuclear weapons. The islands also will play a key role in Indian efforts to parry Chinese inroads in Southeast Asia and to advance the "Look East" policy.⁸⁹

Indian assistance in upgrading and developing the Iranian port of Chahbahar, the headquarters of Iran's third naval region, has been noted. A construction initiative of another kind is the Sethusamudram project, also mentioned above, to cut through the Palk Strait and so permit Indian intercoastal shipping to avoid the long trip around Sri Lanka. Aside from its potential economic importance, such a route will enable warships from India's eastern and western fleets to quickly reinforce one another. In those terms the project is analogous to the 1914 completion of the interoceanic Panama Canal by the United States.⁹⁰

"Military Diplomacy"

Supplementing the foregoing new weapons and military infrastructure advances, New Delhi also will use India's navy and air force, through "military diplomacy," to advance the Indian agenda in the Indian Ocean. India's new *Maritime Doctrine* declares, "Navies are characterized by the degree to which they can exercise presence, and the efficacy of a navy is determined by the ability of the political establishment of the state to harness this naval presence in the pursuit of larger national objectives." To this end, "the Indian maritime vision for the first quarter of the 21st century must look at the arc from the Persian Gulf to the Straits of Malacca as a legitimate area of interest."⁹¹

India's navy and air force were indeed utilized in this manner in response to the December 2004 tsunami, perhaps the world's first global natural disaster. India was quick to extend help to Sri Lanka, the Maldives, and Indonesia. Indian relief operations were fully under way in Sri Lanka and the Maldives by day three of the tsunami (28 December), and the Indian military reached Indonesia by day four. The subsequent relief operation was the largest ever mounted by New Delhi, involving approximately sixteen thousand troops, thirty-two naval ships, forty-one aircraft, several medical teams, and a mobile hospital.⁹²

Other recent instances of Indian military diplomacy include a continuing program of coordinated patrols with Indonesia in the Malacca Strait, naval surveillance of the Mauritius exclusive economic zone since mid-2003, and patrols off the African coast in connection with two international conferences in Maputo, Mozambique—the African Union summit in 2003 and the World Economic Forum conference the next year. An Indian Navy spokesman asserted that in these patrols the “Indian warships [were] demonstrating the Navy's emergence as a competent, confident, and operationally viable and regionally visible maritime power.”

The Indian military also has been very active in pursuing combined exercises with a variety of IO partners. These maneuvers underscore the new flexibility and reach of Indian military forces. A Chinese newspaper, for example, commented that in one two-month period early in 2004 New Delhi conducted seven consecutive and quite effective combined exercises: “The scale, scope, subjects and goals of the exercises are unprecedented and have attracted extensive concern from the international community.” That instance was not unique; the Indian Navy conducted simultaneous combined exercises with Singapore in the South China Sea and with France in the Arabian Sea in late February and early March 2005. All this was followed immediately by a multiservice, combined planning exercise with the United Kingdom in Hyderabad; a naval exercise with South Africa and a port call by warships in Vietnam in June; and the deployment of a large flotilla to Southeast Asian waters in July. The agenda for late 2005 included naval maneuvers with the United States in the Arabian Sea in September, with Russia in the Bay of Bengal in October, and with France in the Gulf of Aden in November. In addition, New Delhi partnered with Russia in a combined air-land exercise near the Pakistan border in October, and with the United States in November in a COPE INDIA air exercise (that latter in a location that clearly suggests mutual strategic concern about China). New Delhi, moreover, is expecting the advent of combined exercises with Japan's navy in the Sea of Japan and the Bay of Bengal in the not-too-distant future.⁹³

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT OF INDIA IN THE INDIAN OCEAN?

Over the past few years, India has placed itself on a path to achieve, potentially, the regional influence in the Indian Ocean to which it has aspired. To this end, New Delhi has raised its profile and strengthened its position in a variety of nations on the littoral, especially Iran, Sri Lanka, Burma, Singapore, Thailand, and most of the ocean's small island nations. India also has become a more palpable presence in key maritime zones, particularly the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea. Of equal or greater importance, India's links with the most important external actors in the Indian Ocean—the United States, Japan, Israel, and France—also have been strengthened. These are significant achievements, and they derive from India's growing economic clout and from a surer hand visible today in Indian diplomacy.

Gaps inevitably remain in India's strategic posture. New Delhi will need to strengthen further its hand in coastal Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. More work also will be required to upgrade still somewhat distant relationships with Australia and Indonesia.⁹⁴ At the same time, India will need to be more skillful than it has been in cultivating—or “compelling”—better relations with, and an environment more attuned to Indian interests in, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Further, much will depend on the performance of the Indian economy and on India's ability to avoid domestic communal discord. Another variable will be the extent to which other states—particularly China and the United States but also Pakistan and others in southern Asia—are willing or able to offer serious resistance to India's ambitions. The future of political Islam is another wild card. However, barring a halt to globalization—one of the megatrends of the contemporary world—the rise of India in the IO is fairly certain.

That will have a transforming effect in the Indian Ocean basin and eventually the world. In the region, the rise of India will play a key role in the gradual integration of the various lands and peoples of this basin. Whether in the Arabian Sea or the Bay of Bengal, this trend—while still nascent—is already evident. The long-term result will be a more prosperous and globally more influential region.

India's rise in the Indian Ocean also will have important implications for the West and China. Perhaps most significantly, New Delhi's ascent suggests strongly that the ongoing reordering of the asymmetric relationship between the West and Asia will be centered as much in the Indian Ocean as in East Asia. It was in the IO, moreover, that the effects of Western power first made themselves manifest in the centuries after 1500. On one hand, it would therefore not be surprising if it were here that the Western tide first receded. On the other, India's role will for a long time to come be no longer in opposition to the United States but in cooperation with it.

Moreover, its rise will be welcomed by the United States and other “Western states” to the extent that it counteracts the challenge posed by China, the world’s other salient rising power. Seen from Beijing, the rise of India in the Indian Ocean will be an opportunity but, even more, a challenge. A strong and influential India will mean a more multipolar world, and this is consistent with Chinese interests. Nonetheless, as China increasingly regards India—not Japan—as its main Asian rival, India’s rise in the Indian Ocean also will be disturbing. As has been the case with virtually all great powers, an India that has consolidated power in its own region will be tempted to exercise power farther afield, including East Asia.

NOTES

The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Asia-Pacific Center, the Department of Defense, or the U.S. government.

1. On the “rise” of India, see Yasheng Huang and Tarun Khanna, “Can India Overtake China?” *Foreign Policy* (July–August 2003), pp. 74–80; “India and China: A Special Economic Analysis,” *Morgan Stanley Equity Research*, 26 July 2004; Yevgeny Bendersky, “India as a Rising Power,” *Asia Times*, 20 August 2004; Clyde Prestowitz et al., “The Great Reverse” (in three parts), *Yale Global Online* (September 2004); Stephen P. Cohen, “Introduction” and chapter 1, “Situating India,” in *India: Emerging Power* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2001); Baldev Raj Nayar and T. V. Paul, *India in the World Order: Searching for Major-Power Status* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2003); C. Raja Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon: The Shaping of India’s New Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Viking, 2003); and “India vs. China: Long Term Prospects” in National Intelligence Council, *Mapping the Global Future* (Washington, D.C.: December 2004), p. 53.
2. National Intelligence Council, *Mapping the Global Future*, pp. 3 and, especially, 6–7.
3. Analyses by the Central Intelligence Agency indicate that when countries are ranked by composite measures of national power—the weighted combinations of gross domestic product, defense spending, population, and technology growth—India is projected to possess the fourth most capable concentration of power by 2015 (after the United States, the European Union, and China) and to be the most important “swing state” in the international system. See Ashley J. Tellis, *India as a New Global Power: An Action Agenda for the United States* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005), p. 30.
4. There are, of course, important exceptions. Two of these are C. Raja Mohan’s *Crossing the Rubicon* and Stephen P. Cohen’s *India: Emerging Power*, both cited above.
5. Mihir K. Roy [Vice Adm. (Ret.)], “Emerging Maritime India,” paper presented at a conference on India and the Emerging Geopolitics of the IO Region, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 19–21 August 2003. See also Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, “Maritime and Naval Dimensions of India’s Security,” in *India and the IO in the Twilight of the Millennium*, ed. P. V. Rao (New Delhi: South Asian), pp. 36–49.
6. See Integrated Headquarters, Ministry of Defence (Navy), *Indian Maritime Doctrine* (INBR 8), 25 April 2004, p. 50.
7. Ralph Peters, “Tsunami Ripples: A New Strategic Map,” *New York Post*, 2 February 2005.
8. Integrated Headquarters, *Indian Maritime Doctrine*.
9. K. M. Pannikar, *India and the IO* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1945), p. 84.

10. See Ministry of Defence, *Annual Report 2004–2005* (New Delhi: n.d.), available at mod.nic.in/reports/welcome.html.
11. On mainly conventional military power, see the author's "The 'Great Base Race' in the IO Littoral: Conflict Prevention or Stimulation?" *Contemporary South Asia* (September 2004) and, on nuclear weapons, "The Indian Ocean and the Second Nuclear Age," *Orbis* 48, no. 1 (Winter 2004).
12. Arun Prakash [Adm.], "Submarine Building Capability Is a Void, Which We Hope to Address," 22 July 2005, as reported in *Force: The Complete Newsmagazine of National Security*, 8 August 2005.
13. See John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2001), p. 232.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 236.
15. India has a long-standing involvement in Antarctica. In December 2004, for example, New Delhi announced it was planning to set up its third research station there. See "India to Set Up Third Station in Antarctica," *India News*, 16 December 2004, available at www.newkerala.com.
16. Marjeet Singh Pardesi, *Deducing India's Grant Strategy of Regional Hegemony from Historical and Conceptual Perspectives* (Singapore: Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies, April 2005), p. 55.
17. James Morris, *Farewell the Trumpets: An Imperial Retreat* (San Diego, Calif.: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), pp. 129–30.
18. Ashley Jackson, "The British Empire in the Indian Ocean," in *Geopolitical Orientations, Security and Regionalism in the Indian Ocean*, ed. Dennis Rumley and Sanjay Chaturvedi (New Delhi: South Asian, 2004), p. 35.
19. On New Delhi's IO as reminiscent of Britain's "ring fence" strategy, see Ashley J. Tellis, "India's Naval Expansion: Reflections on History and Strategy," *Comparative Strategy* 6, no. 2 (1987), and "Indian Security Tradition," in *Assessing Strategy and Military Capabilities in the Year 2000* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND, 1996), p. 2.
20. India's concerns about China are of long standing. See John W. Garver, "Asymmetrical Indian and Chinese Threat Perceptions," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 25, no. 4 (December 2002), pp. 109–34. See also Francine R. Frankel and Harry Harding, eds., *The India-China Relationship: What the United States Needs to Know* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2004), and John W. Garver, *Protracted Contest: Sino-Indian Rivalry in the Twentieth Century* (Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2001).
21. Quoted in Strobe Talbott, *Engaging India: Diplomacy, Democracy and the Bomb* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004), p. 84.
22. Brahma Chellaney, "Should India Consider China a Friend or Rival?" *Times of India*, 21 August 2005.
23. Mohan Malik, "China's Foreign Policy Is Still Dominated by the 'Contain India' Theory," *Force: The Complete Newsmagazine of National Security*, 14 April 2005. On the April 2005 visit of Premier Wen Jiabao and Chinese purchases of oil and natural gas, see Pramit Mitra, "Iran and India Extend Their Friendship," *South Asia Monitor*, 1 January 2005, available at www.csis.org. On China and Africa see Paul Mooney, "China's African Safari," *Yale Global Online*, 3 January 2005, and John Hill, "China Covets African Oil and Trade," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 1 November 2004. The key work on Sino-Indian competition in the Indian Ocean is John W. Garver, "The IO in Sino-Indian Relations," in *Protracted Contest*, pp. 275–312.
24. "China Attack Forced India to Pile Up Arms," *Deccan Herald*, 6 September 2005, Foreign Broadcast Information Service [hereafter FBIS] [emphasis supplied].
25. See Eric A. McVadon, "The Asian Sea in Which Transformation Must Swim," paper presented at the conference on U.S. Defense Transformation: Implications for the Security of the Asia-Pacific Region, Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, 1–3 December 2004. See also James Brooke, "China's Navy Fans Out in the Pacific," *New York Times*, 30 December 2004, and Richard Halloran, "Chinese Sub Highlights Undersea Rivalries," *Japan Times*, 30 November 2004, available at www.japantimes.com. That the Chinese navy is currently operating, or planning to operate, submarines in or near the Bay of Bengal is suggested by "Three Submarines Damaged by

- Earthquake” (30 December 2004) and “2 Chinese Spy Ships Seized off Andamans” (30 November 2004), both *NEWSInsight*, newsinsight.net.
26. See the author’s discussion of China in “The Indian Ocean and the Second Nuclear Age” and “The ‘Great Base Race’ in the IO Littoral.” On the “string of pearls,” see Bill Gertz, “China Builds Up Strategic Sea Lanes,” *Washington Times*, 18 January 2005. See also “China Expands Its Southern Sphere of Influence,” *Jane’s Intelligence Review* (23 May 2005).
 27. Ziad Haider, “Baluchis, Beijing, and Pakistan’s Gwadar Port,” *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 6, no. 1 (Winter/Spring 2005), pp. 95–103.
 28. Ministry of Defence, *Annual Report 2004–05*, p. 46, available at mod.nic.in/.
 29. “Japan, India to Develop Natural Gas Resources,” Reuters, 26 March 2005, available at www.inlnnews.yahoo.com.
 30. Mohan, *Crossing the Rubicon*, p. xxii. Chapter 2 of this work is entitled “Beyond Non-alignment.”
 31. Prakash, “Submarine Building Capacity Is a Void.”
 32. The Manmohan Singh government recently established a Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs and promulgated purportedly new, simplified procedures to allow overseas Indians to acquire Indian citizenship alongside that of the nations in which they currently reside.
 33. “Indian Foreign Secretary Says Delhi Wants ‘Greater Strategic Autonomy,’” *Zee News Television* (in Hindi), 17 March 2005, trans. FBIS.
 34. Anand Giridharadas, “Newly Assertive India Seeks a Bigger Place in Asia,” *International Herald Tribune*, 12 May 2005.
 35. Farham Bokhari and Ray Marcelo, “Washington Upgrades Ties with New Delhi,” *Financial Times*, 29 March 2005.
 36. See the press release signed by the U.S. defense secretary and the Indian defense minister in Arlington, Virginia, on 28 June 2005, “New Framework for the U.S.-India Defense Relationship,” available at www.indianembassy.org.
 37. See, for example, Manoj Joshi, “For a Flying Start,” *Hindustan Times*, 1 April 2005, FBIS.
 38. Manoj Joshi, “Wide Angle—Pak Gets Nanny: Virtually Becomes U.S. Protectorate,” *Hindustan Times*, 12 December 2004. For the “prehistory” (in the British connection) of present-day Indians’ concerns about U.S. employment of Pakistan to contain India, see Stephen Philip Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 2004), p. 34.
 39. See “Excerpts from Pentagon’s Plan: ‘Prevent the Emergence of a New Rival,’” *New York Times*, 8 March 1992, available at www.princeton.edu, and a discussion of this document in Nayar and Paul, *India in the World Order*, p. 224.
 40. On Prime Minister Singh’s congratulatory letter to President Bush on the latter’s reelection, see John Cherian, “U.S. Elections: An Embarrassing Missive,” *Frontline*, 20 November–3 December 2004, available at www.flonnet.com.
 41. A classic on this topic is R. J. Barendse, *The Arabian Seas: The Indian Ocean World of the Seventeenth Century* (Armonk, N.Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 2002).
 42. C. Raja Mohan, “Sale to Pak, Bigger Chance for India,” *Indian Express*, 28 March 2005, FBIS.
 43. Atul Aneja, “India and Iran: A Time for Reflection,” *Hindu*, 25 August 2005, FBIS.
 44. Khalid Mustafa, “Iran-Pakistan-India Gas Pipeline: Pakistan to Get about \$80 Million in Transit Fee,” *Daily Times* (Pakistan), 17 November 2004, available at www.dailytimes.com. Other pipeline projects in which India has shown interest include the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan pipeline and the Gulf-South Asia (GUSA) pipeline (with a possible extension to India) from Qatar.
 45. The Iran and Libya Sanctions Act was signed into law on 5 August 1996 and was renewed in July 2001. The law imposes sanctions on foreign companies that invest \$40 million or more in these two countries’ energy sectors.
 46. See the essays by C. Christine Fair, Jalil Roshandel, Sunil Dasgupta, and P. R. Kumaraswamy in *The Strategic Partnership between India and Iran* (Washington, D.C.: Woodrow Wilson International Center, April 2004). See also Donald L. Berlin, “India-Iran Relations: A Deepening Entente,” in *Asia’s*

Bilateral Relations (Honolulu, Hawaii: Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies, June 2004), available at www.apcss.org.

47. M. K. Bhadrakumar, "South Asia in a Spot over Iran," *Asia Times*, 15 November 2004, available at www.atimes.com.
48. See Frederick Stakelbeck, Jr., "The Growing Tehran-Beijing Axis," *In the National Interest* (January 2005), www.inthenationalinterest.com.
49. Harinder Mishra, "India and Israel: Money Matters," *Asia Times*, 30 November 2004, available at www.atimes.com.
50. Siddharth Srivastava, "Gunning for Peace in South Asia," *Asia Times Online*, 13 August 2005.
51. "India-Israel Alliance Firming Up," *Jane's Intelligence Digest*, 2 March 2005.
52. See Donald L. Berlin, "The Indian Ocean and the Second Nuclear Age," pp. 64–67.
53. G. Parthasarathy, "India's Stakes in the Persian Gulf," *Tribune*, 8 September 2005.
54. "India for Trade Pact with Gulf Council in Six Months," *Hindustan Times*, 16 August 2005, FBIS.
55. "Indian Air Force to Participate in Multinational Exercise in South Africa," Press Trust of India [hereafter PTI], 13 September 2004, FBIS.
56. "India to Train Tanzanian forces," *Indo-Asian News Service*, 12 September 2004, available at www.hindustantimes.com.
57. "Indian PM Hopes to Strengthen Ties during Mauritius Visit," PTI, 30 March 2005, FBIS.
58. "Navy to Aid IO Island-Nations' Security," *New Kerala News Online*, 1 September 2005, www.newkerala.com.
59. The terms "East Indies" and "Further India," of course, are historical designations for the region now (mainly since World War II) generally characterized as "Southeast Asia."
60. Marwaan Macan-Markar, "India Shifts Regional Geopolitical Cards," *Asia Times Online*, 27 January 2005, available at www.atimes.com/atimes/South_Asia/GA27Df04.html.
61. Ajit Dubey, "Smooth Sailing," *Force: The Complete Newsmagazine of National Security*, 1 January 2005.
62. A senior Tamil insurgent leader commented in November 2004: "The Palaly airport is in the Tamil Homeland. India's plan to help upgrade it will upset the current peace process in Sri Lanka. The Palaly airport was built by taking over the Tamil people's lands." "LTTE Asks India to Consult It on Strategic Projects," *Hindustan Times*, 15 November 2004.
63. "Constructive Engagement with India; Hopefully, the First Steps Have Been Taken," *Daily Star*, 10 August 2005.
64. David Fullbrook, "So Long US, Hello China, India," *Asia Times Online*, 9 November 2004, www.atimes.com. See especially Mohan Malik, "New Campaign for Myanmar," *Force: The Complete Newsmagazine of National Security* (January 2005).
65. Khelen Thokchom, "Train to Mandalay Gets Nod," *Telegraph* (Calcutta), 25 November 2004.
66. Gautam Datt, "Singapore F-16s Arrive for War Games," *Asian Age*, 10 October 2004, FBIS.
67. Anthony Davis, "Thailand Strengthens Security Ties with Israel," *Jane's Intelligence Review*, 16 December 2004, available at jir.janes.com. Malaysia apparently has complained loudly to India about the fast-developing Indo-Thai relationship; see "Malaysia Warns India against Thailand," *NEWSInsight*, 3 January 2005, available at www.indiareacts.com.
68. Dr. Sawai Bunma, "Samkok vs. Ramayana," *Krungthep Thurakit*, 17 June 2005, trans. FBIS.
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70. The Indian army probably has lagged a bit in this regard; see Bharat Karnad, "Shaping Indian Special Forces into a Strategic Asset," *Defense and Technology*, 1 December 2004, p. 48, FBIS.
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72. "Russia to Upgrade Tu-142 Warplanes," Agentstvo Voenyenykh Novostei, 21 October 2002; Bulbul Singh, "India, U.S. Near to

- Completing P-3 Orion Sale,” *Aerospace Daily*, 28 August 2002.
73. Pulkit Singh, “India Bolstering Jaguar Fleet, Phasing Out Some Older MiGs,” *Journal of Electronic Defense* (October 2002).
 74. Rodney W. Jones, “Conventional Force Imbalance and Strategic Stability in South Asia,” unpublished paper, 2004, p. 27.
 75. Rahul Bedi, “Indian Conventional Defence Purchases Soar,” *Jane’s Defence Weekly*, 14 September 2005.
 76. Huma Siddiqui, “Military Satellite to Give India ‘Eyes in Space,’” *Financial Express*, 5 September 2005.
 77. Indira Gandhi, address to the Commonwealth Heads of Government, Asia-Pacific Region, New Delhi, 4 September 1980, as quoted by Ashley Tellis, “The Naval Balance in the Indian Subcontinent: Demanding Missions for the Indian Navy,” *Asian Survey* (December 1985), p. 1192.
 78. See Rahul Roy-Chaudhury, *India’s Maritime Security* (New Delhi: Knowledge World/IDSA, 2000), pp. 125–59, and James Goldrick, *No Easy Answers: The Development of the Navies of India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka 1945–1996* (New Delhi: Lancer, 1997), pp. 104–38.
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 81. Huma Siddiqui, “India to Get Subs on Lease from Russia,” *Financial Express*, 31 August 2005.
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 86. A. B. Mahapatra, “Andaman Faces Kargil-Type Invasion,” *NEWSInsight*, 23 October 2002, www.newsinsight.net. See also K. M. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean: An Essay on the Influence of Sea Power on Indian History* (Bombay: George Allen and Unwin, 1961).
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 88. Vishal Thapar, “India Adopts Big Power Posture on High Seas,” *Hindustan Times*, 27 August 2002.
 89. See Berlin, “The ‘Great Base Race’ in the IO Littoral.”
 90. The project will also enhance Indian maritime security in the Palk Straits, which some observers regard as under the de facto control of the LTTE. See P. Venkateshwar Rao, “The Sethusamudram Ship Canal Project,” paper presented at the third annual Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG) International Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 11–13 July 2005.
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