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A Review of the Indian Government's Recent Efforts to Enhance Maritime Security

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ABSTRACT: An overview of the difficulties and capacities of Indian marine security is given in this article. A major concern in the current global order is maritime security. Given that India is encircled by three bodies of water on three sides, marine security is more important than ever. The various threats that ships and maritime operations must be protected against include terrorism, piracy, robbery, illicit persons and goods trafficking, pollution, and unlawful fishing. Numerous initiatives and methods have been developed to improve marine security by international organizations and a number of states, including India. This paper is primary goal is to examine how maritime security contributes to power maximization. The study also evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of marine security in India.

I. INTRODUCTION

Charles Darwin believed that human survival and advancement depended on our capacity to adapt to our ever-changing surroundings. According to him, the species that can adapt and be resilient survives rather than the strongest or most intelligent. Resilient adaptability is a concept that has been demonstrated to work over time, and it is especially applicable in the maritime industry where a flexible strategy is necessary to address new issues.

What Role Does Maritime Security Play in India?
With more than 7,000 kilometres of coastline, India is exposed to a number of dangers, including terrorism, smuggling, illegal fishing, piracy, and environmental degradation. India must defend its coastline and its offshore resources, which include ports, oil and gas infrastructure, fishing grounds, and coastal areas, all of which are frequently the targets of attacks.

India's economy is heavily reliant on the sea; the sea carries more than 70% of its trade value and around 95% of its trade volume. Since the majority of India's energy needs are imported, particularly from the Gulf region, the country must ensure increased security and freedom of navigation in the Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOCs) in the Indian Ocean and beyond. These SLOCs are essential to India's economic development and energy security.

India has historical, cultural, and diasporic ties to many of the countries in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), and it invests in their development and security. India has a strategic interest in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), which is home to both possible enemies and many friendly and helpful nations.

What Difficulties Exist in the Maritime Sector?

Difficult Security Problems:
Asymmetrical Tactics: Asymmetrical tactics give maritime security a new facet. Examples of these are China's deployment of marine militias in the South China Sea. The operations of Ukraine in the Black Sea against Russia. This calls for unconventional and unexpected methods that might deviate from predetermined military strategies.

Grey-Zone Warfare:
Grey-zone tactics, which lie in between conventional and unconventional approaches, make it difficult to respond quickly since they frequently take advantage of legal and regulatory constraints. These strategies may involve clandestine operations and deeds that fall short of open warfare. For instance, nations such as the USA are violating the SEZ.

Combat Drones:
Using combat drones gives maritime operations a new angle and makes it possible for governments and non-state actors to conduct reconnaissance, surveillance, and possibly even strikes.

Land Attack Missiles:
Using land attack missiles at sea directly jeopardizes maritime security.
This includes the use of missiles that, in contrast to popular belief about threats from the sea, may strike land-based infrastructure from marine platforms.

Non-traditional Security Risks:
Illegal fishing poses a concern to maritime security as it has the potential to deplete marine resources and jeopardize the livelihoods of coastal populations. For instance, Sri Lankan fisherman fishing in Indian waters.

Natural catastrophes:
Maritime security and emergency response operations are severely hampered by the rising frequency and severity of natural catastrophes, such as cyclones and tsunamis, in the maritime domain.

Marine Pollution:
The marine area faces economic and environmental risks due to pollution, which includes plastic trash and oil spills.

Human and Drug Trafficking:
Illegal operations such as the trafficking of people and drugs, which frequently use maritime routes, exacerbate insecurity in the marine sector.

Impact of Climate Change:
Less developed states are disproportionately affected by rising sea levels, climate change, and related effects, rendering them more susceptible to environmental changes and catastrophic weather events.

vioZero-Sum struggle in the Indo-Pacific:
The developing world is especially vulnerable to the perceived zero-sum struggle among the Indo-Pacific's major nations The idea that US and Chinese interests and actions in the Indo-Pacific are mutually exclusive and incompatible, and that any win for one side is a loss for the other, is known as "zero-sum competition." The rivalry can divert attention and resources from resolving the littoral governments' security issues in the Southern Pacific, Asia, and Africa.
According to this viewpoint, the two countries are engaged in a zero-sum competition for influence, resources, and security in the Indo-Pacific.

Difficulties with Marine Governance:

Insufficient Coordination:
It is difficult for littoral states in Asia and Africa to coordinate their defense against maritime threats. Effective cooperation is hampered by disparate security agendas and unequal law enforcement capabilities. For instance, the ASEAN nations are frequently reluctant to denounce China's hegemonic practices in the South China Sea.
Unwillingness to Participate: In an effort to become less dependent on outside aid, certain states along the coast oppose marine collaboration with foreign organizations. This resistance may make it more difficult to create thorough and well-coordinated security measures.

Challenges with Information Sharing:
States frequently only disclose the bare minimum of information needed to achieve shared security objectives, despite a readiness to exchange information. For instance, despite the fact that the United States and India have signed multiple accords pertaining to information sharing, there remains reluctance to share information because of security and sovereignty concerns.

What Steps Is India Taking to Strengthen Maritime Security?

Increasing the Capacity of Maritime Security Organizations:
In order to improve their capacity for monitoring and patrolling the country's marine zones, this involves the modernization and growth of the Indian Navy, Coast Guard, and Marine Police.

Additionally, it entails the procurement of cutting-edge platforms, systems, and tools like aircraft carriers, frigates, submarines, helicopters, radars, and satellites.

Enhanced Technical Surveillance of Coastal and Offshore Areas:
This involves putting in place a number of programs and initiatives, including the National Maritime Domain Awareness Project, the National Automatic Identification System, the National Command Control Communication and Intelligence Network, and the Coastal Surveillance Network.
These seek to offer an all-encompassing and cohesive image of the marine sector, facilitating prompt identification and reaction to any threats or incidents.
The National Committee for Strengthening Maritime and Coastal Security, the National Maritime Security Coordinator, the Joint Operations Centers, and the Coastal Security Operations Centers are just a few of the bodies and committees that have been established to facilitate inter-agency coordination.
These are intended to help the Navy, Coast Guard, Customs, Intelligence, Fisheries, and Ports, among other parties involved in maritime security, coordinate and share information more effectively.

Integration of the Coastal and Fishing Communities:
This involves putting in place a number of initiatives, including biometric identity cards, transponders, and distress alert transmitters; conducting community awareness and education campaigns; and offering livelihood and welfare programs.
These seek to improve the security and well-being of coastal and fishing communities by integrating them into the framework for marine security.
Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR), the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS), and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

What Steps Can Be Done to Get Past the Obstacles?
Fostering the development of bilateral, trilateral, or multilateral mechanisms to enhance maritime security cooperation among like-minded countries, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF).
Information exchange, team exercises, capacity building, interoperability, and coordinated responses to shared threats are a few examples of this kind of collaboration.
Creating a system of guidelines or standards for the maritime sector based on international legal concepts, particularly those found in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
A code of conduct of this kind can aid in the management or prevention of conflicts, ease tensions, and encourage initiatives aimed at fostering confidence among marine actors.
Bolstering the skills and function of the coast guards and other maritime law enforcement organizations, since they are frequently the first to respond to unconventional threats including pollution, smuggling, piracy, and trafficking.
They can also be extremely important in protecting the rights and sovereignty of coastal governments, promoting awareness of the marine realm, and offering disaster relief and humanitarian aid.
Utilizing sustainable development, regional integration, and international collaboration to address the underlying causes and drivers of non-conventional problems such poverty, inequality, corruption, governance, and climate change. These can lessen the incentives and chances for criminal activity while also enhancing the security, resilience, and standard of living in coastal communities.

II. CONCLUSION

India is dedicated to ensuring marine security and is navigating the changing environment with programs like SAGAR and IONS. India's efforts to enhance its capabilities and collaborate with other nations not only safeguard its coastline but also promote worldwide marine stability. India is moving toward a future of adaptability, collaboration, and resilience thanks to the vision for secure oceans.

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