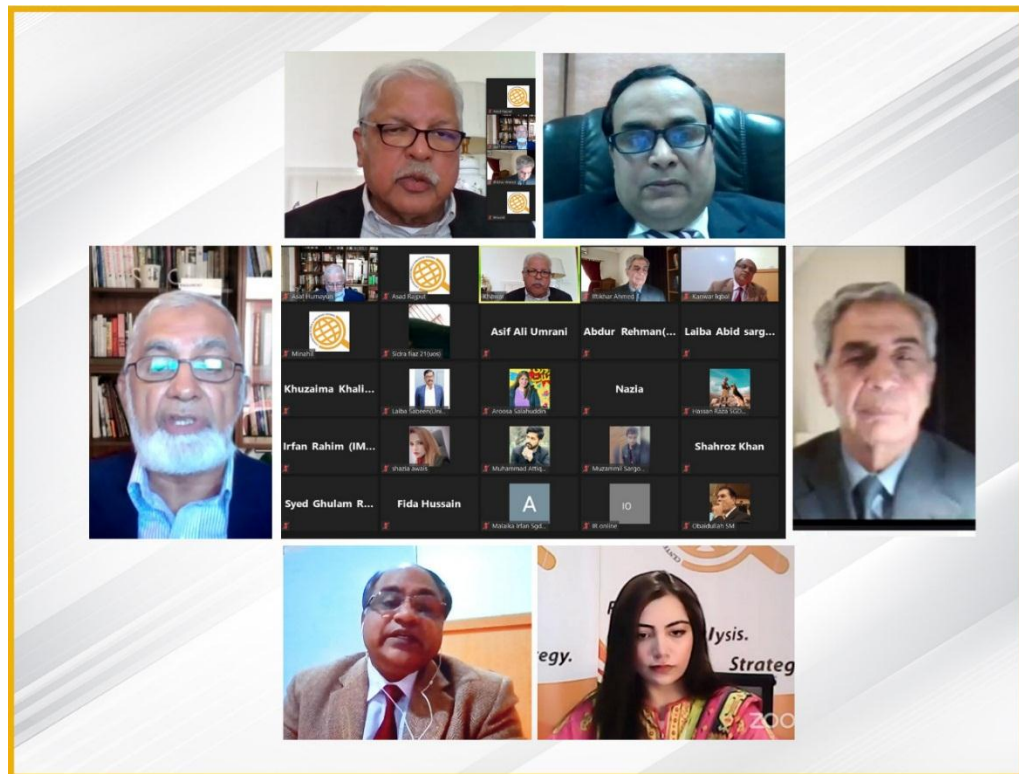




Online Conference Report

“Evolving Strategic Environment in the Indian Ocean Region and Significance of AMAN Exercise 2021”



Organized by
Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad on
9th February, 2021



“CGSS is a Public Policy Institute with a mission to help improve policy and decision-making through analysis and research”

Copyright © Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS)

All rights reserved

Please do not disseminate, distribute or reproduce, in whole or part, this report without prior consent of CGSS



CGSS
Center for Global & Strategic Studies

5th Floor Khyber 4 Plaza, G-15 Markaz, Islamabad, Pakistan

Tel: +92-51-2328615

Email: infocgss@yahoo.com Web: www.cgss.com.pk



Table of Contents

CONCEPT NOTE.....	4
BRIEF OF THE CONFERENCE	6
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	8
ANNEXURE 1: TRANSCRIPT'S OF THE SPEECHES	14
ANNEXURE 2: PRESS RELEASE	40
ANNEXURE 3: MEDIA COVERAGE.....	43
ANNEXURE 4: VIDEO COVERAGE.....	48



CONCEPT NOTE

Since ancient times, nation-states strategize their interest in the oceans and, therefore, indulge in both cooperation and containment. In recent times, the Indian Ocean Region is termed as 'the future sea' on account of trade and connectivity it provides. The contemporary global maritime environment in the Indian Ocean Region is amidst intense competition of various powers. There are challenges emanating out of traditional and non-traditional security threats. For example, maritime politics, naval competition, terrorism, piracy, arms/drugs trafficking and other traditional and asymmetric risks. Moreover, the regional conflicts and power competition of littoral states, have increased the sensitivity of the region.

Today, the Indian Ocean is a strategic hub for this multi-polar rivalry among various countries like US, China, India, France and others. All these states have different geo-strategic parameters to attain maritime hegemony. The partnership of US and India, seeks to counter-balance China. However, China pursues policy of shared future and collective growth. On the other hand, Iran has strategic compulsion to counter geopolitical isolation via energy diplomacy. The European Union views these substantial strategic developments from side-lobes. Presently, Russia, Netherland, France and Germany, have devised their Asia Pacific policies, with increasing footprints in the Indian Ocean Region. In this context, the modern era calls for a closer look at notions of cooperation vs competition. Similarly, it is important to collectively work to enhance the agenda of economic growth and revitalize prospects of maritime security cooperation.

In this backdrop, Pakistan being a responsible and prudent maritime state, has always contributed towards peace and stability of the region. Its faithful commitment to the principle of peaceful coexistence and desire for establishing greater regional harmony is reflected in its strategies. For example, participation in UN Peacekeeping missions, UN mandated Combined Maritime Task Forces 150 & 151, as well as various bilateral and multilateral exercises. In addition to various foreign multilateral engagements, Pakistan Navy took an initiative in combating threats at sea by holding biennial Multinational Exercise AMAN. This series of multi-national naval exercises was first started in 2007. It demonstrates contribution towards peace, regional maritime security and boost connectivity between regional and extra regional navies, particularly, against non-



traditional threats. Since then, this Exercise has become a major international naval event, which is evident from growing number of participations. Till date, almost six exercises have been conducted and the 7th Exercise is going to be held in February 2021.



BRIEF OF THE CONFERENCE

On 9th February 2021, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized an Online Conference on 'Evolving Strategic Environment in the Indian Ocean Region and Significance of AMAN Exercise 2021'. This conference was held at an important time when the seventh edition of the multinational maritime exercise Aman-2021 will be held in Pakistan from 11th to 16th February 2021. The Conference highlighted the potential and importance of the AMAN exercise by the Pakistan Navy as well as the significance of the current geopolitical & geostrategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region.

The conference was moderated by Ms. Minahil Shawal Afridi, Research Executive, CGSS, and was attended by more than 80 participants from all across Pakistan. The conference was also viewed live on Facebook.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & KEY TAKEAWAYS



Executive Summary

- **Significance of the Indian Ocean region**

- a. Since ancient times, nation-states strategize their interests in the oceans, therefore, indulge in both cooperation and containment. In recent times, the Indian Ocean Region is termed as 'the future sea' on account of trade and connectivity it provides.
- b. The contemporary global maritime environment in the Indian Ocean Region is amidst intense competition of various powers. The regional conflicts and power competition of littoral states, have increased the sensitivity of the region.
- c. There are challenges emanating out of traditional and non-traditional security perils. For example, intense maritime politics, naval competition, terrorism, piracy, human/arms/drugs trafficking and other traditional & asymmetric risks.
- d. Indian Ocean is a strategic hub for this multi-polar rivalry among various countries like US, China, India, France, Russia, Gulf States and others. All these states have different geo-strategic parameters to attain maritime hegemony.
- e. In present times, a new emphasis has emerged on countering the non-traditional security risks such as extremist element, gun running, human smuggling, over fishing, illegal activities at sea and other issues.
- f. In this context, the modern era calls for a closer look at notions of cooperation. In this aspect, it is important to collectively work to enhance the agenda of economic growth and revitalize prospects of maritime security cooperation.
- g. China has large economic stakes and investment in the Indian Ocean littoral states. It has formulated and launched the Belt and Road initiative (BRI) in Asia and maritime Silk Road in the Indian Ocean.

- **Prospects of Maritime Diplomacy and Role of Pakistan's Navy: AMAN**

- a. Pakistan being a responsible and prudent maritime state, has always contributed towards peace and stability of the region.
- b. Pakistan's participation in UN Peacekeeping missions, UN mandated Combined Maritime Task Forces 150 & 151, various bilateral & multilateral



exercises and AMAN series are the clear manifestation of its faithful commitment to the principle of peaceful coexistence.

- c. The Indian Ocean is unique as it is characterized by the perennial naval presence of extra regional forces in the region. The maritime or naval diplomacy works 24/7 in IOR for the prevention of a conflict at sea.
- d. Maritime diplomacy requires the closest coordination between the Navies and their foreign ministries. It aims to use maritime forces as a diplomatic instrument to support, persuade, court, deter or compel behavior of other people or nation's state.
- e. Maritime operations, particularly, peacekeeping missions, humanitarian aid, disaster relief, ports visits, international maritime cooperation and even international maritime conferences are examples of maritime diplomacy.
- f. In this aspect, Pakistan Navy took an initiative to combat threats at sea by holding biennial Multinational Exercise AMAN. This series of multi-national naval exercises was first started in 2007. It demonstrates contribution towards peace, regional maritime security and boost connectivity between regional and extra regional navies, particularly, against non-traditional threats.
- g. The AMAN series of multinational maritime exercises, since 2007 is a manifestation of Pakistan's maritime diplomacy. The main focus of AMAN series is to counter maritime terrorism, piracy, drugs, smuggling, arms trafficking, and other non-traditional security challenges at sea.
- h. AMAN brings the navies of diverse nations such as Australia, China, Japan, Russia, the UK and the United States together in a spirit of maritime cooperation. Pakistan navy has also created a Joint Maritime Information Coordination Center (JMICC), to facilitate maritime domain and awareness.

- **China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the Role of Pakistan Navy**

- a. Pakistan Navy being custodian of blue economy, coastal areas, shores and waters of the country is utilizing all possible resources to safeguard the security and commercial interest of the CPEC. Thus its strategic partnership with China and Turkey is a game changer.
- b. CPEC project has now revolutionized concepts of regional connectivity. Moreover, the development of Gwadar port and exploration of natural



resources in EEZ would bring more stability in the region to proceed with and large-scale investments to build and renovate Pakistan's Blue Economy (PBE).

- c. The role of Pakistan's Navy is vital. It is responsible to defend and protect the CPEC, Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC), Coast Areas as well as the ports of Karachi, Bin-Qasim, Ormara and Gwadar.
- d. In this context, a special organization named Task Force-88 (TF-88) has already been formed to the seaward security of Gwadar Port and protection of Associated Sea Lanes (ASLs) against both conventional and non-traditional security threats.
- e. Formation of TF-88 is a giant step towards protection of the ongoing projects of the CPEC along with security of coastal areas of the country, especially, Baluchistan. It is based on 400 marines, which are specialized in defending marine assets/projects both on-shore and seaward, against threats emanating from sub-surface, surface and aerial. It has been equipped with suitable platforms comprising gunboats, frigates, Fast Attack Craft (FTC), drones as well as other electronic surveillance means.
- f. Moreover, it takes care of harbor defense, shore based anti-aircraft artillery, fast patrol craft and surveillance system comprising radars, drones and aerial surveillance systems. The seaward defence can tackle threats emanating from both conventional and non-conventional hostile elements.
- g. Pakistan Navy has formed a separate Naval Base at Gwadar for its security. It has also deployed a Force Protection Battalion (FPB) of Pak Marines along with requisite assets and equipment, both afloat and ashore, to ensure security of the Port and the Chinese personnel.
- h. Pakistan Navy is indeed a champion of Sea Peace and guarantor of indispensable maritime security. It considers that maritime security is not just important for itself but for all other countries whose prosperity and progress are strongly bonded with the sea.



- **Key Takeaways**

- a. IOR has tremendous potential of geo-economic activities, which are not only important to the Asian countries but also equally important for the entire world. In this aspect, the role of major global powers to promote peace and cooperation is vital.
- b. The economic initiative of BRI by the Chinese government is promising prosperity for the entire region, where Pakistan and Iran would be the major beneficiaries of overall development.
- c. China, Pakistan and Iran need to make extra efforts on diplomatic fronts to tackle the threats at sea and also bring all nations together through inclusive economic opportunities.
- d. The CPEC has provided new avenues to harness the true potential and enhance trade by improving existing socio-economic ties.
- e. Pakistani ports and Harbours, especially, Karachi Port Qasim have tremendous significance not only for Pakistan but also for landlocked Afghanistan, Central Asian Republics, Russia and China.
- f. Pakistan increasingly realized that its future lies in pursuing the common goals of the entire region including Afghanistan, CARs, Russia, Iran and China. It also well aware of the fact that perpetual hostility with India is not going to serve any purpose.
- g. The long coastlines and significant harbours provide Pakistan with a strategic location which is ideal for the sea trade and other commercial activities conducted in mostly foreign ships. In this domain, the role of international navigation, the Gwadar port and EEZ is very important.
- h. Keeping in mind the current geo-strategic environment, the maritime information sharing and awareness are the prime requirements, in terms of global cooperation to strengthen any disastrous preventive measures.
- i. Without information or intelligence sharing, a change and effective counter threat strategy can hardly be mounted. Hence, every state should integrate and proactively cooperate in maritime policy orientation process and in enhancing sea trade and communications.
- j. Pakistan's navy vigour's efforts towards containing the sea threats in the context of broader maritime coalition building is remarkable.



- k. The strategic location of Pakistan is ideal for facilitating the communication and promoting trade and cooperation in the region. Over the time, Pakistan has shown a very strong commitment to resolve common issues, formulate and implement joint plans and with the technological advancement.
- l. There is a collective need to sustain the existing initiatives and energize further efforts by all the countries with a strong maritime policy to ensure security, peace and economic cooperation in the region.



ANNEXURES



ANNEXURE 1: TRANSCRIPT'S OF THE SPEECHES

Welcome Remarks

Dr. Mehmood Hassan Khan, Regional Geo-political Analyst & Member Board of Experts, CGSS

On behalf of The Center for Global Strategic Studies, CGSS I welcome all of you to this important webinar “Evolving strategic environment in the Indian ocean & Significance of AMAN-2021. The success of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is directly correlated with Pakistan Navy’s operationalization and channelization. On its part, Pakistan Navy being custodian of blue economy, coastal areas, shores and waters of the country is utilizing all possible resources to safeguard the security and commercial interests of the CPEC. We hope that this webinar will be a great success in terms of dissemination of valuable information about maritime security, diplomacy and role of Pakistan Navy in the Indian Ocean as well as the strategic orientation and value of AMAN 2021.



Speaker 1

Vice Admiral Asaf Humayun, HI(M). (Retd). Former Vice Chief of Naval Staff (VCNS) – Keynote Address

Topic of Speech: Maritime Diplomacy in Indian Ocean Region: overview of current geo-political and geo-strategic developments

Admiral Iftikhar Rao and I can fondly recall our first cruise in September 1972. As young midshipmen, we did not fully comprehend the real purpose other than the excitement of visiting four ports in four countries. This was the first cruise by Pakistan Navy after the 1971 war and signaled Pakistan's foray into maritime diplomacy. Diplomacy is the conduct of international relations by means other than war. Maritime or Naval diplomacy involves the exploitation of the maritime forces in support of the diplomacy. Naval diplomacy requires the closest coordination between the Navies and their foreign ministries. It aims to use maritime forces as a diplomatic instrument to support, persuade, coerce, deter or compel behavior of other people or nation's state. Maritime operations other than war, particularly, peace support operations, humanitarian aid, disaster relief, ports visits, international maritime cooperation and even conferences for bringing navies together are example of maritime diplomacy. Maritimes diplomacy works 24/7 in the Indian Ocean region for prevention of a conflict in sea, despite strong political disputes that persist in the maritime domain. The AMAN series of multinational maritime exercises, since 2007 is a manifestation of Pakistan's maritime diplomacy. These exercises enable us to link with nations from around the globe. The Indian Ocean is unique in that it is characterized by the perennial naval presence of extra regional forces. This started with the arrival of Vasco da Gama in 1498 and is continuing for the last 500 years. What started as a pursuit to build colonial empires is still in work for maintaining geostrategic stability in the important trade routes of the Indian Ocean.

The end of the cold war, globalization, strong non-state actors and the rise of China, all have changed the scenario in the 21st century. The United States has been the dominant sea power in the India Ocean region. The cold war has ended with the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. The Indian Ocean in the new millennium has naval bases and permanent presence of the US and French navy. The Royal Navy and the Russian navy deployed to the region regularly. Regionally, Indian navy was becoming a strong force. A



non-state threat was rising in the littorals of the India Ocean. The attacks on the USS Cole in Aden Harbour in October 2000 was a clear manifestation of the escalating non-traditional risks in the region. After the 9/11 attack in New York in 2001, United Nations mandated that all UN members will carry out anti-terrorists operations. Two naval task forces, CTF-150 in the north Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Oman, and the CTF-152 inside the Gulf comprising the regional and other allied navies such as Australia, Japan and NATO countries commenced maritime security patrols.

After repeated request of the US navy and the allied countries, Pakistan Navy joined task force 150 in 2004. A new emphasis emerged on countering non-traditional security risks such as extremist elements, gun running, human smuggling, and illegal activities at sea etc. The purpose was to ensure that the vast open seas and ocean did not become the sanctuary of the non-state actors and criminals. The complex nature of the security environment demonstrated that the task at hand was not manageable by single nation alone. The emphasis was on cooperation and coalition building among the regional and extra-regional maritime forces. Pakistan navy was offered the command of the task force 150 in 2006 and has commanded this task force on numerous occasions. By 2006 US maritime strategy was calling for a global 1000-Ship Navy comprising on all willing coalition partners. An old menace, piracy, raised its dangerous heads at the Horn of the Africa. Somalia had become a failed state and by 2008 pirates started creating their terror in busy water ways of the Gulf of Aden and quite deep in the Indian Ocean. Navies from all around the world gathered to tackle this threat at the horn of Africa.

US navy and allied joined in task force 151. NATO launched Operation Ocean Shield. The EU created operation Atalanta. The Chinese PLA, Indian, Iranian and Russian navies operated independent units too for the pirates. Within two years a coalition of more than 50 navies from far corners of the world such as Canada, Colombia, New Zealand and South Korea were patrolling the dangerous waters and safeguarding the international maritime trade. Pakistan joined task force 151 and has commanded this task force nine times. The huge coalition effort controlled the pirate's attacks to a manageable level by 2013. However, the task force 151, the EU operation at Atlanta, PLA navy and the Indian navy are still operating of the horn of Africa. The Somali piracy has brought the PLA navy in the Indian Ocean region and China has also established a military logistic space in Djibouti. Other than China, the Royal Navy has now a permanent base at Bahrain.



Other than maritime coalition building, some maritime and naval cooperative initiatives have been launched in the Indian Ocean. The regional cooperation agreement on combating piracy and armed against ships in Asia 'RECAAP' was the first regional government to government agreement to promote and enhance cooperation against piracy and armed robbery against ships in Southeast Asia. The agreement entered into force in 2006. The Indian Ocean naval symposium was launched in 2008. Djibouti code of conduct concerning the repression of piracy and armed robbery against ships was adopted in 2009. The EU has created a regional security arrangement in the western Indian Ocean called project MASE in 2013 creating a regional maritime information fusion center in Madagascar. Pakistan navy has also created a Joint Maritime Information Coordination Center (JMICC) to facilitate maritime domain and awareness.

During two decades of the current century, no interstate naval conflict took place anywhere in the Indian Ocean. However, on land, Afghanistan has been mired in a never-ending insurgency. In Iraq, Saddam Hussain regime was overthrown by military action. Somalia remained lawless. Iran continued its belligerent posture towards NATO and her Arab neighbors. Since 2014, a civil war is raging in Yemen which has sucked in Saudi Arabia, Egypt, UAE and several Arab. Iran is supporting the Yemeni rebels. Syria has been weakened by the civil war during last 10 years. Some of these land conflicts are supported by the naval forces of the warring states. Recently geo-political landscape has seen significant change. Several Arab states have recognized and established the diplomatic relations with Israel. During the final day of the Trump administration, the United States included Israel in the US central command, which will allow greater regional cooperation against Iran, among the Arab, US and the Israeli state. China has become the world's second largest economy. The geo-economy of the Indian Ocean region has shifted in favor of China. China has large economic stakes and investment in the Indian Ocean littoral states. China has formulated and launched the Belt and Road initiative in Asia and maritime Silk Road in the Indian Ocean.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is transforming China-Pakistan partnership and making the port of Gwadar of a hub of activity. China has also become a Pakistan's most important military equipment supplier and diplomatic supporter. The United States views the rise of China as military threat. The U.S started a pivot for rebalancing towards Asia pacific in 2009. Additionally, in 2018, the United States renamed its military pacific



command to United States Indo-Pacific Command, signaling great emphasis on South Asia, especially, India. United States views India as a security partner to check China, Southeast Asia and Indian Ocean. The USA and its allies are also challenging China's control and stance in the South China Sea. Any military conflict in South China Sea will have immediate adverse impact on the maritime strategic balance in the Indian Ocean.

In 2018, an informal security dialogue was started among Australia, Indian, Japan and the US, the QUAD. The main concern of QUAD is China and its military influence in the Asia Pacific. The QUAD is expanding and joining with other dialogue partners namely New Zealand, South Korea and Vietnam. The ASEAN member states are being prodded to join the expanding QUAD. Thus, the focus of the QUAD will be in the Western Pacific and Southeast Asia. However, the situation is ever-changing. The USA under President Biden is shifting its policy in the Middle East. The USA may rejoin the JCPOA and reduce sanctions against Iran. The China-US relationship may also see a nuanced transformation.

In this changing scenario of cooperation, coalition, containment and confrontation, Pakistan has been holding the AMAN series of joint maritime exercise, focusing on maritime terrorism, piracy, drugs, smuggling, arms trafficking, besides natural calamities. AMAN brings the navies of diverse nations such as Australia, China, Japan, Russia, the UK and the United States together in a spirit of maritime cooperation. Pakistan navy is promoter of peace, collaboration and good order at sea. The efforts of Pakistan navy in the last 16 years have contributed to security and stability in the western Indian Ocean. The result is respect and admiration of Pakistan from around the world. Thank you.

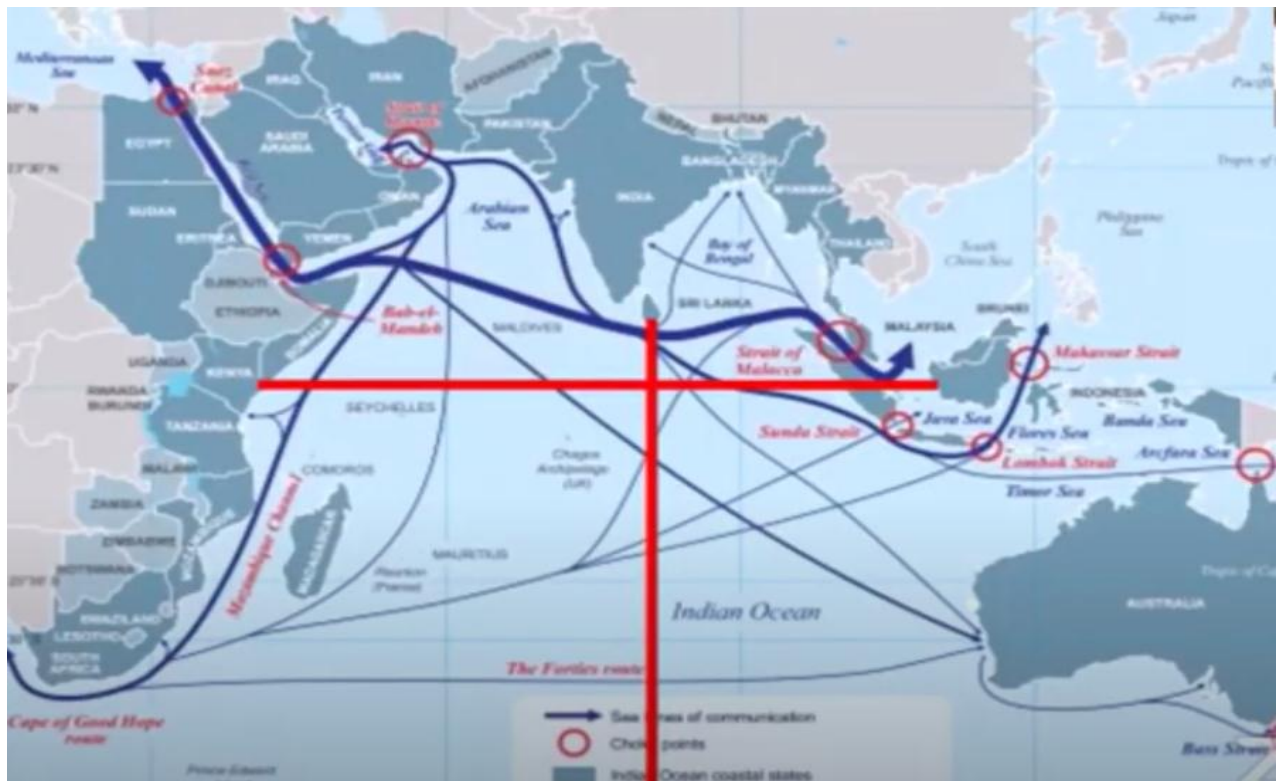
Speaker 2

Vice Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed Rao HI(M). (Retd). Former Deputy Chief of Naval Staff – Guest of Honor

Topic of Speech: Geo-strategic significance of the Indian Ocean region and Importance of Aman Exercise

Looking at the map of the world we can see that the Atlantic and Pacific oceans are divided officially in the North and South along the equator, but the Indian Ocean is not divided. So, officially it is difficult to divide the West and East Indian Ocean. If we further sub-divide it into north and south the along the equator. Pakistan lies in the Northwestern region. This is where the major international maritime traffic of the world's lies.





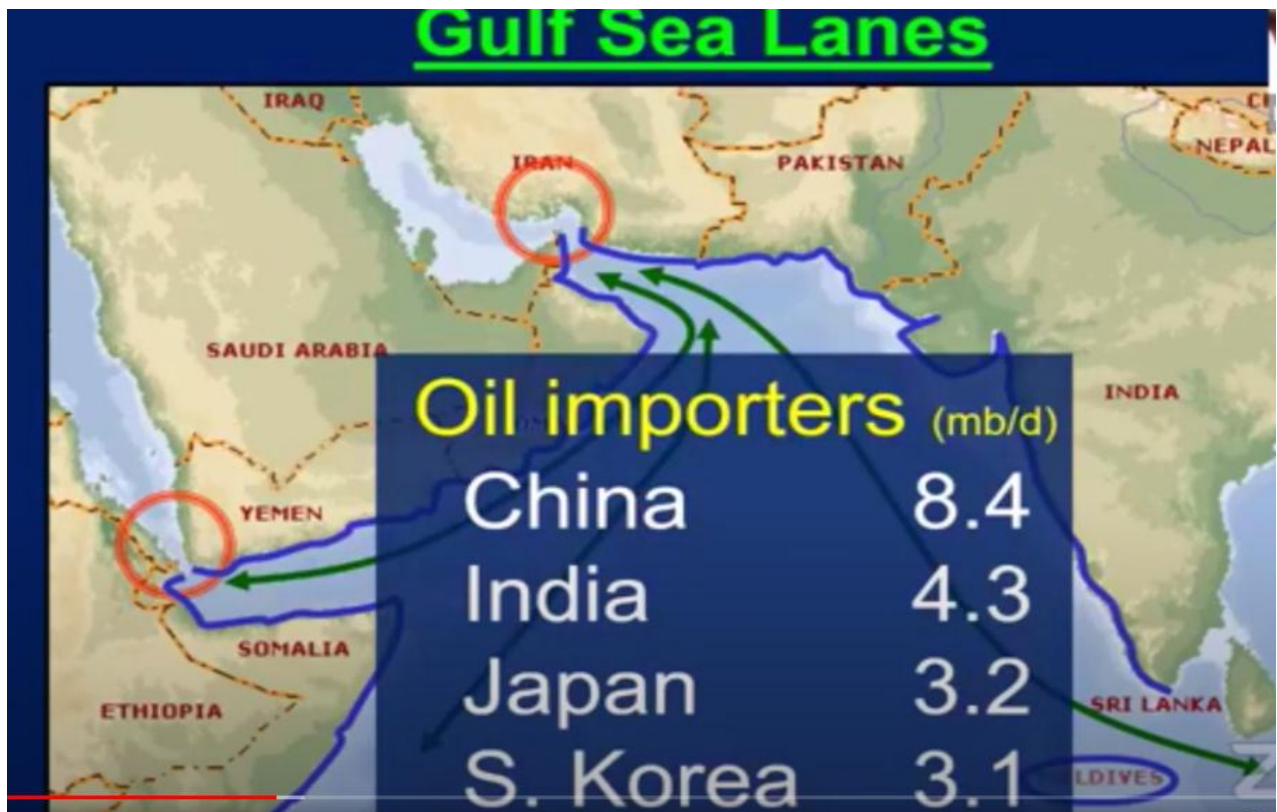
In this regard certain routes are very important as mentioned in the slide below:



Importance of West Indian Ocean

- Gulf sea lanes
- SUEZ connecting Atlantic and Indian Ocean through Mediterranean
- Choke points
- Cape route
- Big power competition (confrontation)
- Indian Hegemonic designs (Bull in the china)
- Ocean Economic Resources

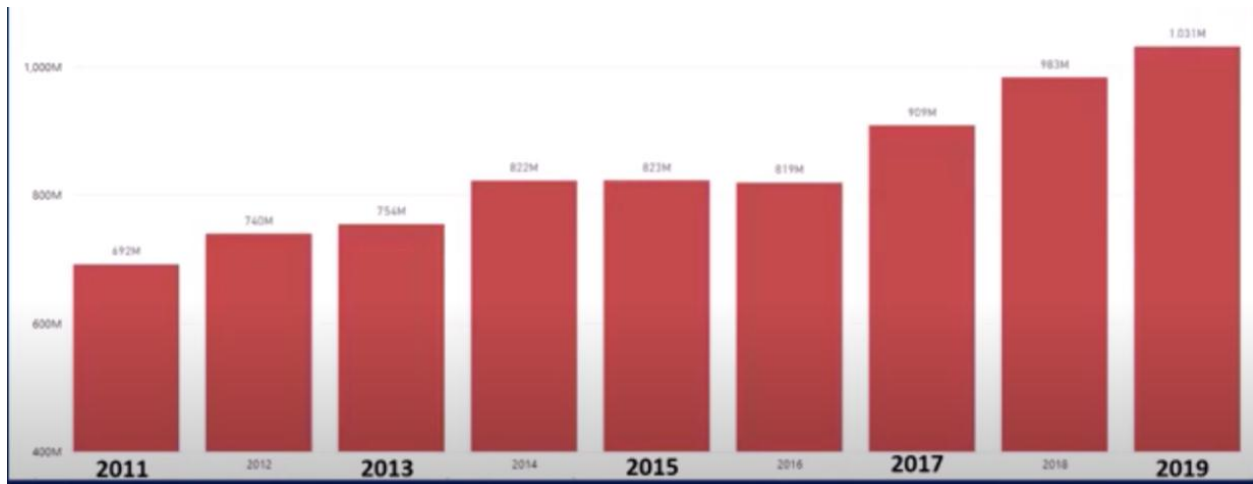
One important sea lane passed through the Arabia and the dependence of the oil import of various Gulf or various developed countries are mentioned in the slide below:



US was the biggest importer but now if it is no more, China is the biggest oil importer now. Most of the oil from the Gulf goes to the East. With the Suez Canal the route is shortest and the Suez traffic also come in the same area.



So, the Gulf traffic and the Suez traffic when they combine together, they become huge sea port traffic. The growth of Suez traffic is growing and improving from 2019 and mentioned in the slide below:



So, all this combined is making important route and all these are going towards the Malacca choke point to the Gulf and mainly in the China. The choke points, Strait of Hormuz, Babul Mandab and Strait of Malacca all pass through the same area. More than 18 million barrels of oil per day, pass from Hormuz and bulk of it goes to Strait of Malacca. That is why the region is important.

Big powers have interest in the region. USA being number one power of the world, so far, has a big interest; then China; and the India (who aspires to become a big power). US maritime policy of 2015 have gone to the east coast of Africa to the west coast of America as mentioned in the slide below. Now they call it Indo-Asia-Pacific that is primarily expanding their reach.



Moreover, China is not behind. They previously talked about limited sea defense however now they have different view of China's national defense as mentioned in the slide below:

- To safeguard China's maritime rights and interests and to safeguard China's overseas interests.
- PLAN is speeding up the transition from defense on the near seas to protection missions on the far seas

The Indian maritime doctrine of 2004 states that the key to controlling the Indian Ocean lies in controlling the chokepoints, important islands and the vital trade routes. They want to control the choke points as mentioned in the slide below:



Indian Ocean Trade

- Control of choke point could be useful as a **bargaining chip in the international power game**, where the currency of military power remains a stark reality.

So, in India's doctrine, the hegemonic design is mentioned. The conflict scenario of Indian maritime doctrine is mentioned in the slide below:

- Operations in the **extended neighborhood**
- **Protecting Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Indian interests abroad**
- Safeguarding Indian energy assets **outside territorial India**

The maritime interests and challenges out at sea are common and mentioned in the slide below:

- Mutual maritime interests:

- Freedom of navigation
- Safe flow of commerce
- Protection against criminal activities like Piracy, Smuggling, Drugs and Human trafficking etc.
- Deterrence against terrorism and
- Protection of the oceans' resources

- Mutual maritime challenges:



- Challenges at sea – are of a **transnational or global in nature**, and therefore require a collaborative approach
- Maritime challenges go **beyond** the narrow concept of **interstate conflict**.
- The concept of **Collaborative Maritime Security** has gained preeminence.

The global maritime partnership is mentioned in the slide below:

- **No one nation has the resources required**
US Cooperative Strategy for 21st Century Sea power
- "In an interconnected world, the burden of security has to be shared."
Secretary of the US Navy, Ray Mabus

Pakistan Navy in this aspect has done a great job for collaborative security and coalition building. For example, in the post 9/11 situation, when there were global talks on WOT, Pakistan navy joined 2004 maritime campaigns Task force 150. Initially we were the only regional country, which were the part of CMCP. Then the 2006 command TF 150 was given to Pakistan where the navy did an excellent job.

- Post 9/11 situation
- **2004: Joined** Coalition Maritime Campaign Plan (CMCP) Task Force 150 (**TF-150**)
- **2006: Commanded TF 150**



After the command was given Prof. Geoffrey Till in December 2006, wrote in his book about Pakistan Navy;

- The fact that the **Pakistan Navy** recently has been entrusted with **command** of Task Force 150 is **strong evidence of its significance** for “**theater security cooperation**” and **coalition-building**.

After these tasks in 2007, the AMAN series of combined effort was started. Along with the AMAN exercise along with the international maritime conference. In which a lot of leaders, writers and experts on the maritime field have been speaking. In 2009, we have the counter piracy task force 151. Among all the participating navies, Pakistan navy has the highest occupancy time, which has never fallen below 80% of tasking. Pakistan navy has gained a lot of prestige in international naval scenario.

The AMAN exercises and collaborative maritime security is important. The AMAN series started in 2007, because of the terrorist’s situation most of the countries did not want to participate. But even in those conditions international navies came here and attended the exercises and activities at shore also. Even now in this pandemic situation all these navies are coming and participating in AMAN. This shows that how the maritime diplomacy by the navy has hanged the importance for Pakistan.. The aim of the important AMAN exercise is mentioned in the slide below:

- Aman series exercises are very imp and significant effort in this regard.
- Not aimed at any country or perceived threat from any country or group of countries.
- Aimed at common threats to peace and security at sea and in the region.
- It is inclusive not exclusive. All are welcome. China, USA, Russia,



- Solidarity Message against miscreants.
- Inter-operability in Navies of regional and peace loving countries to operate together.
- Learn from each other's experiences.
- Maritime diplomacy and soft image through various events on the sidelines of the exercise.

Pakistan navy is doing a great job. AMAN exercises and this maritime conference is the significant effect in creating a good image of Pakistan and especially in the maritime field.



Speaker 3

Vice Admiral Syed Khawar Ali Shah HI(M). (Retd). Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Maldives and Ex DG, National Institute of Maritime Affairs (NIMA)

Topic of Speech: Evolving strategic environment in Indian Ocean Region and significance of Aman 2021

Indian Ocean region is not a homogenous body. It is spread in distinct regions including the Persian, the Gulf, Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Bay of Bengal, Mozambique Channel, Malacca straits and onwards to Australia. The regions have their own issues and the bulwark against any geopolitical hegemonic designs is the nation state. China from 1948, the PLA navy has progressed and it is the new power which is rising. If you look at the future its maritime power is going to be six carrier groups with SSBN and SSNs, the strategic nuclear submarines. China never went outside the Chinese navy till 1986. They first made a visit to Karachi. In 2008, they joined piracy patrol and that started their permanent presence. Chinese have constructed base in Djibouti and that model is very interesting. It is a one tiny country which is at a very strategic location. It has given the bases to the traditional base host French, Japanese and the US. This is a huge evolution. The strategic vulnerability of China lies in the Indian Ocean because all its trade and its oil dependency have to go through Malacca Strait. This is also known as Malacca dilemma for China.

The US is the major power and it foresees the danger from China. Indian Ocean is a place where US thinks it can contain China. There is a major power rivalry which has come back. But it cannot go in the cold war scenario because China is globally connected to all the regions, nation states and they have huge stake in the financial trade. The American's effort to contain it and restart a cold war cannot follow because the world has moved towards cooperation. Now because of globalization there are different layers in the geo-politics. There is one at the higher level, containing the super power rivalry. The others are at the regional level and below that are the state level and in between them there is a great common, which is the sea. Despite all these geo-politics going on, there is a need to cooperate.

The international law stresses to have stability which is essential for economic development and the legal requirements. There are a very interesting dynamics which are developing at sea. The Indians see Indian Ocean as an opportunity and as their lake.



They have started having bases in Mauritius. They have given some ships and submarines to Myanmar. They are trying to match the Chinese but they do not have the same economic power. The major driver these days is the geo-economics rather than geopolitics, such as the maritime component of BRI, the Maritime Silk route. China is spending a lot of money in all development of ports and special economic zones.

There is no other country which can match the Chinese at this stage. So, there is a distinct advantage to the Chinese. For example, in Maldives, all the infrastructure projects were made with the Chinese assistance and because of that there is a transformation which has taken place in the Maldives. There is port Colombo to Hambantota, then there is the oil pipeline going from in Myanmar, which is already operational in transporting oil. Similarly, the CPEC which is the centerpiece of BRI. Then there are additional deals which the Chinese have done with billions of dollars future deals with the Iranians.

The efforts to contain China due to the geo-economics will not bear that kind of fruit in the Indo-Pacific command and the QUAD alliances. If you look at the conflicts in the geopolitical scenario in the Indian Ocean, mostly they are in the Northern part like the Iranians versus the US-Israel nexus, Middle Eastern countries recognizing Israel, conflict in Yemen, instability in Somalia and conflict in Iraq, issue in Afghanistan etc. Any conflict on land has bearing on the sea for example the Kashmir issue. The government of India would not allow anything good happening at the sea between Pakistan and India. Similarly, the recent conflict between China and India have direct bearing out events at the sea.

The other thing which has been changing is the technology. Previously, it was easy to block ships and cargo. Now there is a lot of hubs which are developed and it is very difficult to trace that which container is going where because of so many destinations. There is so much integration has taken place. The common strategic needs of the Indian Ocean region littorals are such that there are 36 countries and everyone wants stability and the blue economy to grow. So, stability is the need of the hour of all littoral nations of Indian Ocean. There are problems like non-state actors, the illegal crimes, narcotics smuggling and human trafficking. So, there is a need to have a common inter-operability even with the adverse nations because there is the maritime boundary with each other.



Without stability there would be no economic growth. There is a huge maritime tourism component, which is developing as a part of blue economy. This brings to the need of having maritime domain awareness. The Artificial Intelligence (AI) has a huge role. India has developed huge maritime intelligence centers with 20 nations. They have signed a secret deal of exchange of information with the US also. With AI coming, there will be autonomous ships. AI will going to be a new sort of thing which has come to maritime domain awareness. This will increase the need of these countries even the adversarial countries to develop together.

A lot of nuclear based dumping is going on. So to control these challenges there has to be international law under the conventions. In the maritime domain, awareness has become a huge issue. There is nuclearization of the Indian Ocean is going to go on. The Indians are launched with Arihants. There is a lot of military and aircrafts trying to track this nuclear submarine because this is the second-strike capability. The Asian states need a lot of presence to counter that.



Speaker 4

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, Regional Geopolitical Analyst & Member Board of Experts, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad

Topic: Economic aspects of Pakistan's navy and its strategic role in the best interests of security of CPEC and the Indian Ocean

The success of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is directly “correlated” with Pakistan Navy’s “operationalization” and “channelization”. On its part, Pakistan Navy being custodian of blue economy, coastal areas, shores and waters of the country is “utilizing” all possible resources to safeguard the security and commercial interest of the CPEC. In this connection, its strategic partnership with China and Turkey is a “game changer”. Naval Chief Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi commended Pakistan Navy’s efforts for “maritime security” of the region. He also pledged Pakistan Navy full “professional” as well as “tactical” preparedness to protect the maritime interests and sea frontiers of the country. Most recently, while visiting the Pakistan Naval Head Quarter, Prime Minister Imran Khan also highly appreciated diversified but integrated efforts of the Pakistan Navy for the “defense” of the country’s Sea Frontiers (SFs). He also commended Pakistan’s navy for providing “security” to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project including the Gwadar Port and assured all possible cooperation.

India’s arms-race especially, naval force procurement/buildup existence of Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QSD) comprising of USA, India, Japan, Australia navies, activation of US warship in the Arabian Sea. Indian’s conflicting socio-economic policies against (BRI& CPEC), widening geopolitical US-China trade war and last but not least, booming US-India Strategic Dialogue all have, forced Pakistan’s Navy to start its rigorous “modernization” through trustworthy and sustainable defense cooperation with China and Turkey and promote indigenous defense industry and operations to cope with the looming threats from the regional enemies and its global sponsors. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project has now revolutionized concepts of regional connectivity, which also unfortunately created elements of insecurity among the regional countries especially India.

The theory of Offensive Realism (OR) supports Pakistan’s ambitions to acquire modern technology and increase its naval power in the Arabian & Indian Seas. With the ongoing



caravans of socio-economic prosperity, greater regional connectivity (air, sea, roads), massive industrialization, development of new routes for Pakistan's blue economy, emergence of logistic hub/seaport like Gwadar and extended commercial ties with Afghanistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan and all the GCC member states all indicate strategic role of Pakistan Navy to provide essential elements of "security" and "sustainability" and "survival" for the country and as well as region against all possible maritime threats. It is imminent that geo-strategic location of CPEC, being flagship project of the BRI and Gwadar Port city development would attract a number of threats such as piracy, terrorism, illicit human trafficking and other potential proxy threats.

Furthermore, the exploration of natural resources in EEZ would require more stability in the region to proceed with and large-scale investments to build and renovate Pakistan's Blue Economy (PBE). So, role of Pakistan's Navy is vital. Pakistan Navy is responsible to defend CPEC, easy and smooth Sea Lanes of Communication (SLOC) open and protection of Pakistan's Coast Areas (PCAs) as well as the ports of Karachi, Bin-Qasim, Ormara and Gwadar. In this context, a special organization namely Task Force-88 (TF-88) has already been formed to the seaward security of Gwadar Port and protection of Associated Sea Lanes (ASLs) against both conventional and non-traditional threats. It comprises 400 Marines, who specialize in defending marine assets/projects both on-shore and seaward, against threats emanating from sub-surface, surface and aerial. It has been equipped with suitable platforms comprising gunboats, frigates, Fast Attack Craft (FTC), aircraft, and drones as well as other electronic surveillance means. Moreover, it takes care of harbor defense, shore based anti-aircraft artillery, fast patrol craft and surveillance system comprising radars, drones and aerial surveillance systems.

The seaward defence can tackle threats emanating from both conventional and non-conventional hostile elements. Formation of TF-88 is a giant step towards protection of the ongoing projects of the CPEC along with security of coastal areas of the country especially Baluchistan. Although, the Gwadar Port is primarily a commercial port, Pakistan Navy has also formed a separate Naval Base at Gwadar for its security and its seaward approaches. It is used by Pakistan Navy and units which are deployed for security and defence of Gwadar Port. The Naval Base will not be used by any foreign navies as propagated by India however naval ships from all countries are welcome for berthing at the port.



The success of the ongoing projects of the CPEC and the Gwadar Port project has direct correlation with the safe and secure maritime environment in the Indian Ocean region as well as in the Arabian Sea. The Pakistan Navy has followed a multi-layered holistic approach to cope with the emerging challenges such as beefing up security of Gwadar Port, conducting security patrolling, coastal exercises, enhancing Maritime Domain Awareness and engaging in Collaborative Maritime Security with regional and extra-regional navies. Pakistan Navy has also deployed a Force Protection Battalion (FPB) of Pak Marines along with requisite assets and equipment, both afloat and ashore, to ensure security of the Port and the Chinese personnel.

Being prominent regional expert of the CPEC & BRI I appreciate all sincere efforts and professional & tactical preparedness of the PN to protect the “strategic interests” of the country. The Pakistan Navy has been playing a vital role in national security domain by “mitigating” series of Non-Conventional Threats (NCTs), such as climate change, illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, illegal immigration, smuggling of arms and drugs, piracy and maritime terrorism. The Pakistan Navy also “combats” with Conventional Security Threats (CSTs) and defends more than a thousand-kilometer coastline. Now, Pakistan Navy is also “protecting” the “commercial”, “infrastructural development” and “logistic apparatus” of Pakistan by taking all possible measures to address the challenges originating from the maritime dimension of CPEC.

The 7th AMAN multinational naval exercise will be held in Pakistan on February 21, 2021. It is expected that 45 countries will participate in it. Russia will also be taking part in the AMAN-7 for the first time, which shows its eagerness to extend military and naval cooperation with Pakistan. Hopefully, AMAN-7 will further enhance Pakistan’s Navy professional and tactical capability and will be a giant step in its future capacity building measures. The main theme of AMAN-7 is peace, which means through peace the “pace”, “production” and “prosperity” of the Gwadar seaport will be further enhanced. Development of Gwadar Port is important for the economic prosperity of Pakistan. For Pakistan, the economic benefits from Gwadar stem from its proximity to the Strait of Hormuz as a key shipping point and trade hub, once road, rail and air links connect it to the rest of Pakistan, Afghanistan, China and Central Asia.

Pakistan wishes to use Gwadar Port for trade and energy transportation to China, Afghanistan and Central Asia. Moreover, with the development of rail, road and air



connection between Gwadar and surrounding areas, all trade from and to China and Central Asia will adopt the shortest available route via Gwadar multiplying the trade benefits for Pakistan. CPEC is the main focus of recent relations between Pakistan and China. It provides an opportunity for China and Pakistan to improve their interaction with Central Asia, West Asia and the Middle East, will equally contribute to the socio-economic development of other countries that become part of these arrangements.

Pakistan Navy has already realized the importance of a “holistic” and “futuristic” policy to pursue a “collective” and “collaborative” policies/plans and approaches towards maritime security. By pursuing and implementing “diversified” but “integrated” peace initiative’s the Pakistan Navy has become an “active partner” in international naval coalitions. Furthermore, it has also developed its own initiatives such as the “AMAN” series of multinational naval exercises, the annual international maritime conference, institutionalization of coastal command and the joint maritime information coordination centre (JMICC). However, the increased economic and commercial stakes in the region will necessitate additional maritime security efforts notably from the Pakistan Navy and the China.

To match-up with the emerging maritime security trends and to protect ongoing mega project of the CPEC, Pakistan government is committed in enhancing the operational capacity of both the Pakistan Navy and associated Maritime Security Agency (MSA). We are living in a complex and complicated world where structural realism plays very important role. Indian Ocean a mishmash of multifarious challenges. This brings with it a clash of strategic interests, competing economies and power struggles between regional and extra, regional powers. Maritime security and diplomacy are the way forward for securing our waters, shores, blue economy and commercial interests. Roughly 90 percent of the global trade is handled via the shipping industry and transferred to more than 4,000 ports worldwide, making these vital arteries responsible for handling goods worth more than \$4 trillion annually.

Pakistan is a peace-loving country that believes in regional security and stability. Pakistan Navy’s active participation in international coalitions, holding of Multinational Exercise AMAN and other initiatives is a testimony of its commitment to promote peace and stability through a collaborative architecture. Pakistan has substantial stakes in the maritime domain in terms of extraordinary dependence on the seas for trade,



operationalization of CPEC project, and strategic location astride the global energy highway. 'Sea unites while Land divides', Pakistan considers that maritime security is not just important for itself but for all other countries whose prosperity and progress are strongly bonded with the seas.

To conclude, I uphold that the complexity of Indian Occasion, diversity & depth of Arabian Sea, protection of commercial/merchant navy operations, coping with dangerous pirates and last but not least, security of coastal areas all witness “gallant” response and combat capabilities of Pakistan Navy. It is indeed champion of Sea Peace and guarantor of indispensable maritime security. Sincere efforts should be initiated to have joint venture with Turkey to build a stealth submarines and drones for the further strengthening of maritime security of the country in the days to come.

**Speaker 5**

Kanwar M. Javed Iqbal, Senior Research Fellow, Maritime Governance, National Institute of Maritime Affairs

Topic of Speech: Enhancing Maritime and Security cooperation among Indian Ocean Countries

There is no doubt that Indian Ocean is one of the busiest and important Ocean of the world trade. The geo-economic and geo-significance of the Indian ocean littorals are interconnected to each other due to large scale of population, trade and cultural roots, sea-based economy, cultural tourism and other interests of leading global powers. IOR has tremendous potential of geo-economic activities, which are not only important to the Asian countries but also equally important for the entire world. The addition of BRI has provided new avenues to harness the true potential and alleviate the poverty by improving existing socio-economic ties in the Indian Ocean littoral countries.

There is a growing concern observed in the level of relevant international stakeholders that the geo-political and geo-economic aspects have diverse dimensions in the region where the philosophy of enhance cooperation of maritime security, peace and stability would be highly needed in order to promote socio-economic uplift and ensure prosperity in the region and beyond. The new economic initiative by the Chinese government is promising for the entire region, where Pakistan and Iran would be the major beneficiaries of overall development. The role of major global powers needs to promote peace and cooperation. For which China, Pakistan and Iran need to make extra effort on diplomatic fronts. From Pakistan's perspective, it is important to ally itself with forces of regional progress and for that it has to alter the region and turn itself in mega corridor.

For this purpose, Pakistan increasingly realized that its future lies in pursuing the common future of this region including Afghanistan, CARs, Russia, Iran and China. Furthermore, it also realizes that perpetual hostility with India is not going to serve any purpose and the only way to solving the dispute in this region is through shared vision of prosperity for huge population deprives form the opportunities. It deserves to materialize its potential but India has a very typical mind-set with its hegemonic designs in the Indian Ocean region and is trying to pose itself as a maritime regional power. It is



interested in holding sway over the choke points in the IOR. Thus, causing turbulence in the existing security of the regions.

However, it is not possible going to the magnitude of the China's military and economic competence. The biggest and the most important player to carve out this constructive picture out of this troubled region is undoubtedly China. China's emerging strategy for the maritime affairs in the IOR has two interconnected building blocks that is the philosophy of two oceans navy initiative of the maritime Silk Road. For which an aggressive work is being done by the China over the last 10 years or so in order to achieve these two milestones in an influencing manner. The strategic significance of Gwadar will certainly help China in addressing its current vulnerability of the Malacca dilemma. The geo-economics of the maritime silk route, present China with interest to acquire, maintain and defend if needed and these interests can only be safeguarded through a strong level.

Pakistani ports and Harbours, especially, Karachi Port Qasim have tremendous significance not only for Pakistan but also for landlocked Afghanistan, CARs, Russia and now very much increasingly China in view of the CPEC project. Long coastlines and significant harbours provide Pakistan with a strategic location which is ideal for the sea trade and other commercial activities conducted in mostly foreign ships. The role of Pakistan in international navigation, the Gwadar port and EEZ is very important for development. However, the rise of non-conventional threats near the coastal areas of Pakistan hampers its economic and security interests ignoring all these impacts will intentionally place Pakistan in an adverse position in with landlocked countries to which Pakistan wants to offer a pathway to the IOR. Until or unless these non-traditional threats are resolved, Pakistan will not be able to its national security. It is important to stabilize the economy for acquiring the defence modernization and to deal with NTS threats.

Pakistan needs to focus more on the naval empowerment of its naval forces for ensuring security as its sea lanes, and international maritime interest in the IOR. The uninterrupted threats of terrorism have transnational apprehensions of diplomatic interests of Pakistan in IOR. Possible assaults by radical military factions with the assistance of regional powers opposing CPEC, a sea ports and coastline along with the danger of weaponization, human trafficking and smuggling could obstruct global trade



activities on the coastline of Pakistan. The serious maritime security threats not only marginalize national security of Pakistan but other coastal states of the IOR.

Collective efforts and comprehensive maritime security strategy to safeguard national and regional interests. International ships and ports facilities meant to secure world maritime offer to guideline principles of safety and security of ports and sea lanes. Under these rules and regulations joint intelligence system and a security plan can be shared, focusing on maritime security, agencies, customs, immigration policy, police, piracy, narcotics control and related issues. It is fact that challenges related in maritime security transcend national boundary and regional jurisdiction.

Criminal activities on the high sea and maritime terrorism of the present demands greater emphasis on a coordinated and cooperative approach at global level. While keeping in mind national aspirations and perceptions of the regional states. While high sea demands jurisdiction of any state and with almost 90% of the world states by volume being carried out via the medium of sea, one can imagine the problems involved. The high sea constitutes a vast frontier with a high level of vulnerability. This level of vulnerability to the world support where huge amount of cargo is loaded and off loaded as well as the huge logistics supply chain.

The international community is now well aware that the only way in which maritime security threats can be effectively addressed and neutralized is through extensive global cooperation. The formulation of the international ship and force facilitates security court had been the first step in this joint endeavour. Piracy and terrorism remained predominate threats in the IOR. The issue of piracy is assuming threatening dimensions and there are diverse perspectives on counter strategy. It would be more fruitful that instead of being reactive in approach, we need to rethink the problem of piracy to enable the minions to be completely eliminated. Since this portion possess great strategic significance, it is obvious that vulnerability demands such greater attention. For one thing its access is controlled by several chokepoints such as Babal-Mandab and the busy state of former's Malacca and Sunda. Any disruption of SLOC will result in disastrous consequences of the security and the economy of the world. All state thus has a vital stake in preserving the sanctity and security of all maritime traffic, whether in port and or crossing the choke points or traversing the high sea.



This can only be translated into reality through a well-coordinated and cooperative approach involving the entire global maritime community. The emerging challenges and the new challenges being faced on the high seas and their effects on the littoral states vision and strategy need to be examined. Emerging opportunity for conflict resolution and problem solving in a regional and global context need to be identified. If our dreams of effective maritime security management are to become a reality. An effective and well deliberated response can lead us to our goal of peaceful co-existence and economic well-being.

Keeping in mind the current geo-strategic environment, maritime information sharing is the prime requirement in terms of global cooperation and most vital link in the coordination chains which not only enables coastal states to strengthen preventive measures but also drop an integrated proactive policy. Without information, a change and effective counter challenge can hardly be mounted. Every state however should do is bog and it was heartening to learn Pakistan's navy vigour's efforts towards containing the twin threats of piracy and terrorism in the context of broader maritime coalition of the building.

The AMAN series of multinational exercise was the right initiative and very much successful in promoting regional cooperation and greater in stability. In a nutshell the strategic location of Pakistan is ideal for facilitating the communication and promoting trade and cooperation in the region. Over the time Pakistan has shown a very strong commitment to its resolve of formulation and implementation of plans and policy in conformity with environmental requirements and technological advancement with make the maritime sector more vibrant in global context. There is a need to sustain the existing initiatives and energize further its efforts with a strong maritime to ensure security peace and cooperation in the region.



ANNEXURE 2: PRESS RELEASE

On 9th February 2021, Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS), Islamabad organized an Online Conference on ‘Evolving Strategic Environment in the Indian Ocean Region and Significance of AMAN Exercise 2021’. This conference was held at an important time when the seventh edition of the multinational maritime exercise Aman-2021 will be held in Pakistan from 11th to 16th February 2021. The Conference highlighted the potential and importance of the AMAN exercise by the Pakistan Navy as well as the significance of the current geopolitical & geostrategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region.

The conference commenced with the opening remarks of Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, Regional Geopolitical Analyst & Member Board of Experts, Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad. He welcomed the esteemed panelists and the participants. He stated that the diversity of panelists having rich experience showcase the positive and productive role of CGSS in highlighting Pakistan’s maritime potential at the global level.

Vice Admiral Asaf Humayun, HI(M), (Retd), the former Vice Chief of Naval Staff presented the keynote speech and highlighted the significance of AMAN exercise for regional peace and security. He stated that the complex nature of maritime security requires collaborative efforts by the regional and extra-regional powers. He said that Pakistan is playing a key role in enhancing maritime security cooperation. He also elaborated comprehensively on the recent major developments in the international geopolitical landscape. He concluded by appreciating the efforts of the Pakistan Navy in organizing and conducting the AMAN exercise and stated that in this changing scenario of cooperation, coalition, containment, and confrontation, Pakistan has been holding AMAN series of joint maritime exercise with its focus on eliminating maritime terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking, arms smuggling besides natural calamities. AMAN brings the navies of diverse nations together in its spirit of maritime cooperation. He stated that this effort would boost maritime cooperation at the international level.

Vice Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed Rao, HI(M), (Retd), the former deputy chief of naval staff discussed the geostrategic significance of the western Indian Ocean region and important aspects of the ocean including the Gulf sea lanes, Suez connecting the Atlantic and Indian ocean through the Mediterranean, the choke points, cape routes, and ocean



economic resources. Admiral Iftikhar elaborated the important Gulf oil trade routes i.e. Strait of Malacca, Strait of Hormuz, and Babul-Mandab strait as the key chokepoints. He also highlighted the importance of the AMAN exercise by stating that it is directed towards addressing common maritime challenges in the region. Moreover, it is an inclusive platform that is open for all countries. The focus of this series is on maritime diplomacy and peace. AMAN plays a prominent role in creating a positive image of Pakistan, especially in the maritime realm.

Vice Admiral Syed Khawar Ali Shah HI(M), (Retd), Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Maldives and Former Director General National Institute of Maritime Affairs, profoundly discussed the evolving strategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region and the significance of AMAN 2021. He stated that the Indian ocean has distinguished regions and thus a bulwark created against hegemonic designs. He also explained China's role in connecting the region through trade linkages and financial assistance. He stated that the strategic maneuvering of China is rising in the Indian ocean that has also increased the economic activity. He stated that Indians see the Indian Ocean as their lake and have started establishing bases in Mauritius, started increased engagement with Myanmar, etc. They are trying to match the Chinese, however, they lack economic power. Admiral Khawar stated that the main driver in the present era is the geo-economics rather than geopolitics. China's maritime silk route under the BRI is extremely important in this regard, which has a key role in connecting nations. He also explained the legal aspects and laws related to the sea. He concluded that there is the need to cooperate at a bigger level to attain peace and stability of the region in which Pakistan is playing a huge role by AMAN exercise to demonstrate peaceful co-existence.

Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, Regional Geopolitical Analyst & Member Board of Experts, CGSS gave an analysis on the strategic role of the Pakistan navy in CPEC and the Indian Ocean region. He stated that the CPEC project is revolutionizing the connectivity and regional discourse. He also highlighted the integrated efforts of the Pakistan Navy for the defense of the country's seafronts and providing security to the CPEC project including the Gwadar port. The success of CPEC is directly correlated with Pakistan Navy operationalization and channelization. He further stated that the Pakistan Navy being the custodian of blue economy coastal areas, shores and waters is utilizing all possible means and resources to safeguard the country's security and commercial interests of CPEC. Its



strategic partnership with China and Turkey is a game-changer. Global and regional developments like the emerging Asian NATO comprising of India, USA, Japan, and Australia, activation of US warship in the Arabian sea, Indian conflicting socio-economic policies against BRI and CPEC, widening geopolitical US-China competition, and last but not the least the booming Indian US strategic dialogue partnership all have compelled Pakistan Navy to start its rigorous modernization with sustainable cooperation with China to promote regional peace and harmony.

Kanwar M. Javed Iqbal, Senior Research Fellow NIMA, comprehensively talked about enhancing maritime and security cooperation among the Indian Ocean Countries. He explained that IOR has immense significance. He elaborated on the prospects of cooperation through BRI that provide new avenues in harnessing connectivity in IOR and its littoral states. Furthermore, Mr. Iqbal also explained the positive role of China in maritime diplomacy. He discussed the strategic importance of the Gwadar port that will allow China to solve its Strait of Malacca dilemma. Mr. Iqbal concluded that peace and stability are needed to increase maritime economic growth. He also said that maritime non-traditional issues need cooperative and collaborative effort at the regional and international levels. He appreciated the Pakistan Navy's efforts and commitment in combating threats at sea through the series of AMAN.

The conference was moderated by Ms. Minahil Shawal Afridi, Research Executive, CGSS, and was attended by more than 80 participants from all across Pakistan. The conference was also viewed live on Facebook.

ANNEXURE 3: MEDIA COVERAGE

1. Daily Islamabad Post

<https://islamabadpost.com.pk/speakers-highlight-importance-of-maritime-security-at-cgss-webinar/>

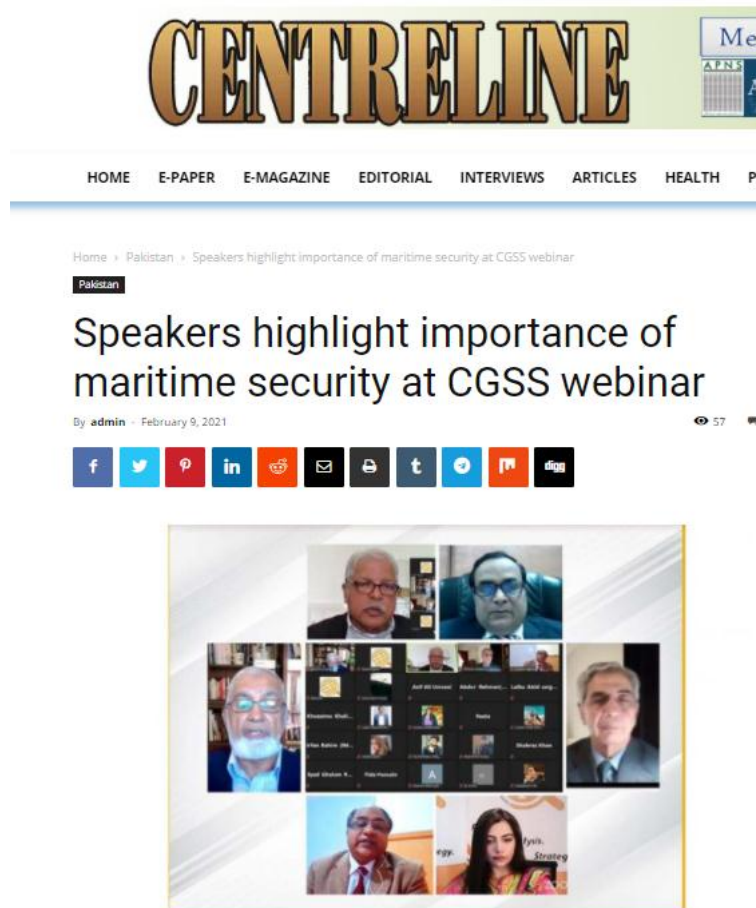


DNA

ISLAMABAD: Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) Islamabad organized an Online

2. Centreline

<https://centreline.com.pk/2021/02/09/speakers-highlight-importance-of-maritime-security-at-cgss-webinar/>



3. National Herald Tribune

<https://www.dailynht.com/epaper/main.php?action=epaper&id=main&page=5&dt=10-02-2021>

National Herald Tribune

WORLD DIGEST

5

ONLINE CONFERENCE ON 'EVOLVING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF AMAN EXERCISE 2021' ORGANISED BY CGSS, ISLAMABAD

Complex nature of maritime security requires collaborative efforts by the regional and extra-regional powers: Vice Admiral Asaf Humayun

AMAN PLAYS A PROMINENT ROLE IN CREATING A POSITIVE IMAGE OF PAKISTAN, ESPECIALLY IN THE MARITIME REALM:
VICE ADMIRAL IFTIKHAR AHMED RAO, HI(M), (R), EX-DCNS

THERE IS A NEED TO COOPERATE FOR ATTAINING PEACE, STABILITY OF THE REGION IN WHICH PAKISTAN IS PLAYING A MASSIVE ROLE BY AMAN EXERCISE TO DEMONSTRATE PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE: VICE ADMIRAL SYED KHAWAR ALI SHAH HI(M), (R), EX-DG NIMA

SALEEM RAIS

Analyst & Member Board of Experts, Center for Global & Strategic Studies, Islamabad. He welcomed the esteemed panelists and the participants. He stated that the diversity of panelists having rich experience showcase the positive and productive role of CGSS in highlighting Pakistan's maritime potential at the global level.

Vice Admiral Asaf Humayun, HI(M), (Retd), the former Vice Chief of Naval Staff presented the keynote speech and highlighted the significance of AMAN exercise for regional peace and security. He stated that the complex nature of maritime security requires collaborative efforts by the regional and extra-regional powers. He said that Pakistan is playing a key role in enhancing maritime security cooperation. He also elaborated comprehensively on the recent major developments in the international geopolitical landscape. He concluded by appreciating the efforts of the Pakistan Navy in organizing and conducting the AMAN exercise and stated that in this changing scenario of cooperation, coalition, containment, and confrontation, Pakistan has been holding AMAN series of joint maritime exercise with its focus on eliminating maritime terrorism, piracy, drug trafficking, arms smuggling, besides natural calamities. AMAN

exercises in the region. Moreover, it is an inclusive platform that is open for all countries. The focus of this series is on maritime diplomacy and peace. AMAN plays a prominent role in creating a positive image of Pakistan, especially in the maritime realm.

Vice Admiral Syed Khawar Ali Shah HI(M), (Retd), Former Ambassador of Pakistan to Maldives and Former Director General National Institute of Maritime Affairs, profoundly discussed the evolving strategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region and the significance of AMAN 2021. He stated that the Indian ocean has distinguished regions and thus a bulwark created against hegemonic designs. He also explained China's role in connecting the region through trade linkages and financial assistance. He stated that the strategic maneuvering of China is rising in the Indian ocean that has also increased the economic activity. He stated that Indians see the Indian Ocean as their lake and have started establishing bases in Mauritius, started increased engagement with Myanmar, etc. They are trying to match the Chinese, however, they lack economic power. Admiral Khawar stated that the main driver in the present era is the geo-economics rather than geopolitical. China's maritime silk route under



is directly correlated with Pakistan and security cooperation among the Indian Ocean Countries. He explained Navy operationalization and channelization. He further stated that the that IOR has immense significance. He Pakistan Navy being the custodian of elaborated on the prospects of cooperation through RRT that provides new

4. Dispatch News Desk

<https://dnd.com.pk/cgss-organizes-conference-on-aman-exercise-2021/212173?amp>

HOME PAGE > CGSS ORGANIZES CONFERENCE ON AMAN EXERCISE 2021

NATIONAL

CGSS Organizes Conference on AMAN Exercise 2021

SHARE

PUBLISHED BY
Mati

2 WEEKS AGO

RELATED POST

Rs 5 billion being ploughed into Ehsaas Interest Free Loan
ISLAMABAD, Pakistan: With the new injection of Rs 5 billion to upscale the Ehsaas Interest... Read More

New Punjab Assembly Building likely to be ready for Senate Polls
PM to inaugurate the long-delayed building PSC seeks permission for setting up 'Pakistan Handicrafts Souvenir'... Read More

China Pakistan Study Centre Holds Public Talk on CPEC and Balochistan
ISLAMABAD, Pakistan: The China Pakistan Study Centre (CPSC) will hold a

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan: The Center for Global & Strategic Studies (CGSS) on Tuesday organized an Online Conference on 'Evolving Strategic Environment in the Indian Ocean Region and Significance of AMAN Exercise 2021'.

The Conference was held at an important time when the seventh edition of the [Multinational Maritime Exercise Aman-2021](#) will be held in Pakistan from February 11 to 16, 2021.

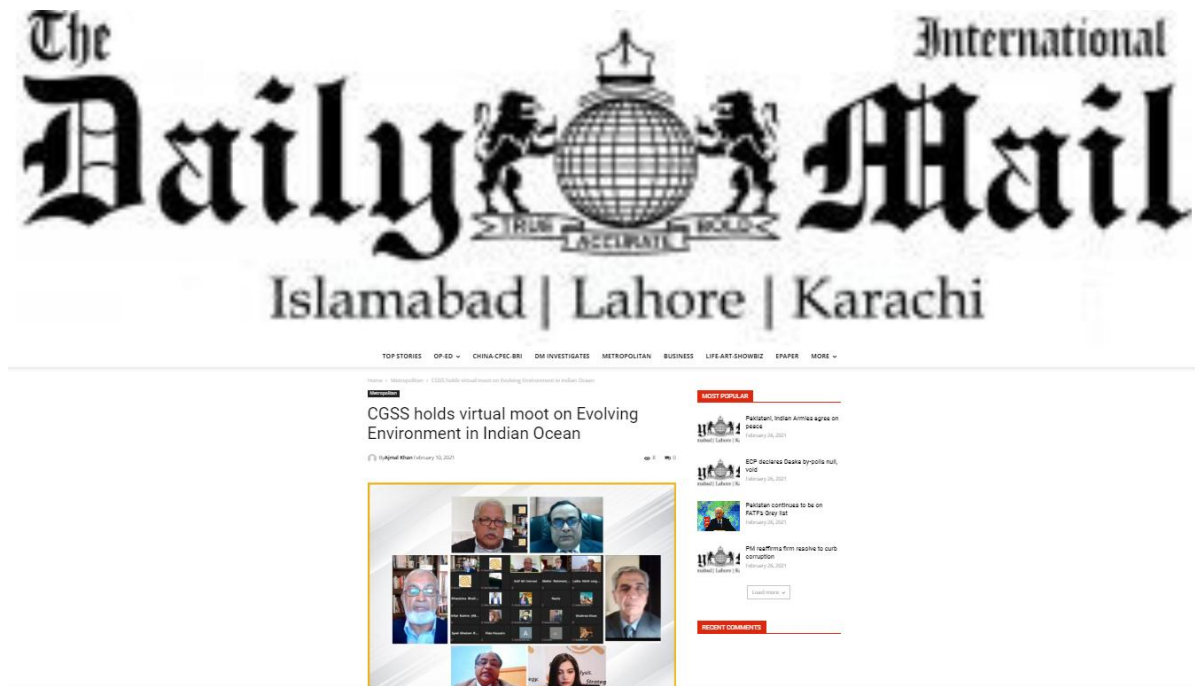
The Conference highlighted the potential and importance of the AMAN exercise by the Pakistan Navy as well as the significance of the current geopolitical & geostrategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region.

In the Opening Remarks, the Regional Geopolitical Analyst & Member Board of Experts CGSS Dr. Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan said that the diversity of panelists having rich experience showcase the positive and productive role of CGSS in highlighting Pakistan's maritime potential at the global level.

The former Vice Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral (retd) Asaf Humayun presented the keynote speech and highlighted the significance of AMAN exercise for regional peace and security. He

5. The Daily Mail

<https://dailymailnews.pk/2021/02/10/cgss-holds-virtual-moot-on-evolving-environment-in-indian-ocean/>



ANNEXURE 4: VIDEO COVERAGE

CGSS Youtube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50hacQYIoGA>

