

Maritime Awareness In Pakistan

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Introduction

Pakistan has always had a sea, but it has been the most neglected area in the national policy. Owing to lack of maritime awareness, Pakistan has failed to develop its shipbuilding industry, which arguably is the driver of all other industries. A state would greatly benefit by setting up its own shipping lines, building ports, focusing on 'blue economy'. Blue economy entails using vast sea resources, exploring ocean tides potential for renewable energy, developing coastal tourism, etc. Because of lack of maritime awareness, Pakistan has failed to capitalize on its geo-political/geo-strategic significance. Situated at the doorstep of world's biggest energy reservoirs, Pakistan can serve as a conduit for Central Asian states access to Indian Ocean (IO) resources. Pakistani ports could have been major transshipment ports in South Asian region for China and Central Asian states. Despite being a geo-strategically important country in the region, Pakistan has failed to initiate maritime security constructs in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean.

Cumulatively, these aspects could have helped Pakistan expand its GDP and geopolitical radiance far more than what it did by being an agrarian economy and a land-centric country. Statistics suggest that Pakistan's lifeline depends on the sea - almost 95% of its trade is conducted through the sea lanes - yet, Pakistani policymakers and the general public remain unaware of the vital significance of the seas. Since its inception, Pakistan has had trouble unshackling itself from what is now called the 'land-locked' or the 'continental' mindset. Many attribute it to the notion of 'tyranny of geography'. Pakistan fought for survival, in the earlier years of its existence, to security-centricity; and that has impacted country's activities in the maritime domain. Agriculture has been the chief ingredient of Pakistan's economic calculus and changing direction from it was

analogous to abandoning a 'hardwired' conventional mindset. The long land border with its arch rival India meant a strategy which will be oriented towards land, neglecting the maritime frontiers. A mix of these factors dominated strategic thinking and political focus and maritime infrastructure development was relegated to the backburner.

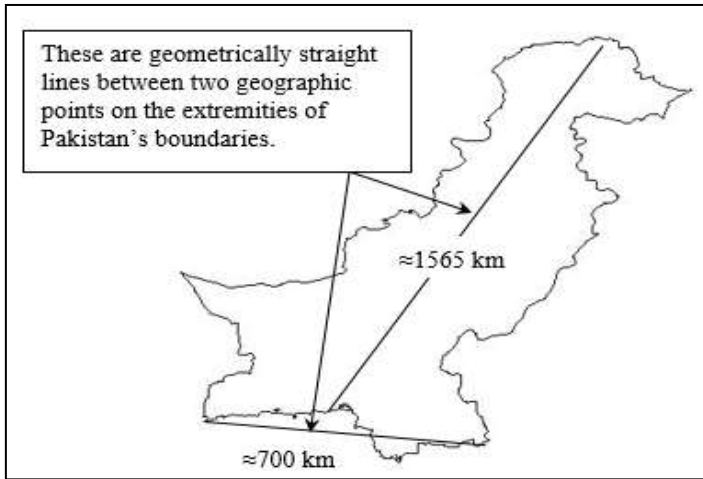
Pakistan has poorly developed port and harbour infrastructure, low standard ship-building industry, polluted seas, below par fishing capacity, non-existent coastal tourism and massively under developed Makran coastal belt. Pakistan's share of sea expanse is considerable as compared to the size of any of its four provinces, yet it does not have a maritime culture – which could foster an instinctive ability to 'think maritime'. Majority of Pakistanis do not even know the exact location of the Arabian Sea and the geography of Pakistan's coast. Therefore, research, investment and inclination towards adopting a maritime profession have not been given a serious thought. A proper survey of Pakistan's maritime zones has not yet been done to ascertain types, kinds and extent of living and non-living resources, let alone tapping resources from that immense body of water. Maritime economy or the 'blue economy'¹ have never really figured in the construct of Pakistan's economic set of priorities. Considering the fact that many a small maritime nations have leveraged the access to oceans and enhanced their economic capacity, but Pakistan, blessed with 290,000 sq km of sea, has not planned or set a direction in its 'scheme of things' for sea-based economy.

Awareness about oceans being conduits of power projection and diplomacy is grossly missing from Pakistan's national thinking. 'How navies could contribute in extending the long arm of diplomacy' is not truly understood by many of the lawmakers. The reality Mahan once noted that 'sea is a great maritime common'² needs to be acknowledged in the sense that strategic partnerships among nations emerge, realize and sustain only at sea and never

over land. Seas in the vicinity of Pakistan have been witnessing emergence of coalitions, partnerships and alliances that a maritime state, like Pakistan, cannot ignore. Therefore, it becomes essential to comprehend that seas are vital for Pakistan to remain strategically relevant in regional and global affairs.

Maritime Geography

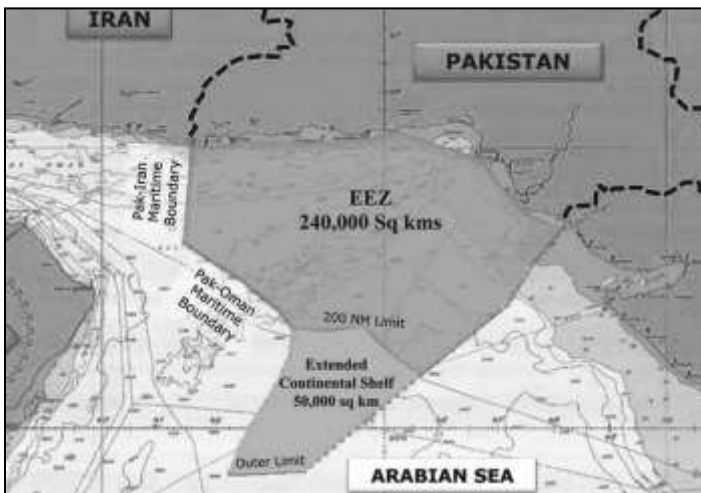
Maritime geography is defined as, “the physical and social study of the sea, its associated rivers, islands and shorelines, depths and air above. It is concerned with all that geography normally implies in its emphasis on area, distance, location, distribution, and the interaction of sea phenomena with man.”³ Relationship of geography and politics is a matter of interest for scholars as well as general public around the world. It basically tells us how geography of a state is crucial to furtherance of its political objectives and ultimately the wellbeing of its people.⁴ Geographic orientation of a country with respect to its ability to access seas has a great significance to its influence on the regional and global affairs. The greater its land area lies along the sea, the wider are the opportunities for a country to radiate its footprint across a region. Physically, Pakistan is in a North-South orientation that makes its lay proportionally less with the sea as compared to the portion away from it. Its coastline to overall length⁵ ratio ($\approx 44\%$) shows the extent of land that the waters of Arabian Sea wash. Pakistan’s coastline runs in an East-West direction with a total length of about 1000 km.



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Pakistan's Coastline to Continental Depth Ratio⁶

Pakistan's claim of both Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)⁷ having an area of 240,000 sq km, and Continental Shelf (CS)⁸ of 50,000⁹ sq km have been acknowledged by the United Nations. It has sovereign economic rights of exploration and use of living and non-living resources from a total sea area of 290,000 sq km. Taking Pakistan's total land area to



Pakistan's Share of EEZ and CS¹⁰

Be 796,095 square kilometres, this equates roughly to about 36.42% of total landmass of Pakistan. However, coastal areas of Pakistan are sparsely populated and population and economic centres (barring Karachi) are away from the coast. This demographic asymmetry and geographic disposition have made Pakistan nearly a 'land-locked'¹¹ country, despite having a unique part of the Subcontinent from where the first sea trade, in the world, began. Paul Collier's *The Bottom Billion* shows how Pakistan nearly is a continental (having no access to sea) country as far as extracting benefits from the sea and coast are concerned.¹² This geographic orientation kept affecting governmental directions, people's thinking and academicians' focus resulting into the notion of 'continental mindset'.

Strategic significance of Pakistan's geography can be seen through some facts such as sea lines of communications from oil-rich Middle-East which pass very close to Pakistan, enhancing its potential to influence flow of oil. Gwadar port, the linchpin of China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), lies just 290 Nautical Miles, from the Strait of Hormuz. If developed as a deep sea transshipment port, Gwadar can connect to Central Asian states, providing a shorter link with rest of the world through the Indian Ocean. CPEC, in this respect, can present a convergence of land and maritime economics. Crisis prone regions of Yemen and Afghanistan would keep attracting extra-regional players in the maritime arena for projecting power ashore through their respective naval forces; and this would keep Pakistan relevant in the regional and global contexts. Makran coast has the infamous label of 'Hash Highway' because of unchecked flow of drugs from Afghanistan for onward transportation to Africa and Europe. As for natural disasters, it is believed that the Ocean itself is home to world's 70% of natural disasters. Pittock in his book *Climate Change* claims that Indian Ocean is warming speedily¹³ and the same was noted by International Panel on Climate Change that temperature rise in Indian Ocean is about 0.2° C per decade.¹⁴ With respect to pollution,

the Pakistan's maritime geography suggests that a culture or capacity for preservation of environment does not exist. Pollution of seas and its impact on environment will keep the global attention glued to this maritime region. These fundamentally important factors, derived from maritime geography of Pakistan, impinge on overall national security of Pakistan.

Maritime Culture

The term *Maritime Culture* implies "an understanding of the use of the seas by humans, and the attendant structures, cultural identifiers and associations made between people and seafaring."¹⁵ A quick look reveals that there is no significant maritime culture in Pakistan – though the history of the region in maritime affairs dates back to the time of Alexander The Great when he took a route along the Makran coast on his way back to Macedonia;¹⁶ and in the seventh century when famous Battle of Daibul¹⁷ took place on the shores that now are part of Pakistan. Stopford¹⁸ suggests that the world's first sea trade network actually was established between people living around the deltaic region of Indus River and Mesopotamia. McEvedy¹⁹ depicted the routes in his *Penguin Atlas of the Ancient World* and argued that trade between those two great civilizations of human history existed through seas since 2000 BC.

Communities living on the Makran coast have been venturing into the sea for livelihood for centuries sans an accompanied evolutionary advancement unlike European countries – where a wooden boat-making transformed, with the passage of time, into large ship-building industry. Sea does not make a significant part of culture of those who lived on the shores of Arabian Sea – as opposed to the commonly held belief that sea substantially affects the lives of people living on its shores.²⁰ Unfortunately, in this part of the coastal world, modern knowledge, skill and technology did not convert into innovations. Fishing apparatus being used here have visible signs of an unchanging past. Fishermen's villages and

dwellings in and around Karachi – a metropolis – still represent somewhat medieval look – one can see glaring signs of depravity, illiteracy and inability to change. This is the place which should have been the fountainhead of the notion of *maritime awareness*. Balachandran²¹ opines that most of the South Asian seafarers remained ‘invisible’ from professional writings of historians – mostly because they hadn’t adapted from the conventional way of life to the new ones – i.e., a shift from working on wooden boats to large steel merchant ships. Whereas the other nations like Chinese, British and Americans made tremendous progress and improved their lifestyles.

A cultural transformation of people on Pakistan’s coast from being traditionalists²² to modernists had not occurred. The ‘modernists’ or ‘age of high consumption’ is the highest stage on the progressive economic growth model propounded by the American economist Rostow in 1960.²³ Failure of Pakistani coastal communities to change into progressive ones had a deep impact on the overall coastal development, which can be felt to this day. For this reason, the phrase ‘pervasive absence’ of a maritime culture has been used to acknowledge the reality that along the entire coast of Pakistan a ubiquitous link between the sea and the coastal community is missing – i.e., no sports at sea, no sea faring, primitive fishing methods and archaic equipment, to name a few short comings. Lack of maritime culture, despite a history of over 4000 years, resulted into a phenomenon commonly referred to in academic parlance, as ‘sea blindness’ – i.e., ignoring an existential reality of sea and instead preferring to look towards land. Maritime awareness, should form a central part of national strategy, to cure sea blindness.

Maritime Institutes

There are several institutes in Pakistan working in the maritime domain. Institute of Maritime Affairs (IMA), under the auspices of

Bahria University, is notable of all. It was created in 2017, replacing the older National Centre for Maritime Policy Research (NCMPR), which was established in 2007. IMA has two wings, NCMPR (Karachi) and NCMPR (Islamabad). NCMPR (Karachi) “serves as a think-tank for analysis and study of maritime affairs” and “provides important guidelines and solutions for national stakeholders to meet challenges in the maritime domain.”²⁴ NCMPR (Islamabad) recently established as part of IMA. Its purpose is to expand research and analysis in the maritime domain at a place away from Karachi. It is still in its infancy and work is being done to effectively establish its academic/institutional foundations.

Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC) was established as ‘PN Staff School’ in 1968, at Karachi, and was upgraded to PN Staff College in 1972. The College was relocated to Lahore, in 1996, and was renamed ‘PN War College’. The prime purpose of this upgrade and movement to Lahore was to create ‘maritime awareness’ among general public and policy makers. Lahore was selected as this is centrally located and is an established centre city influential place for scholars and government officials.

Pakistan Marine Academy (PMA) is the institution which provides training to seafarers. It was established in 1962. It is also the regional branch of World Maritime University, Malmo, Sweden. It is the centre for training of merchant navy officers.

Institute for Maritime Studies (IMS)²⁵ is a privately owned institute established in 1996, having branches in Lahore and Karachi. IMS offers courses for merchant navy professionals in various domains – from engineering and ship-handling to maritime security.

National Institute of Oceanography (NIO) was established in Karachi, under the aegis of Ministry of Science and Technology, in 1981. NIO’s core area of focus is oceanic and atmospheric processes of the north Arabian Sea and their impact on Pakistan’s climate, living and non-living resources. However, as NIO claims, “the ambit of oceanography extends from the atmosphere to the ocean floor

and below it, and from the coastal region to the great mass of the deep oceans.”²⁶

Maritime Training Institute (MTI) was established in Karachi, in 1998, “to protect Pakistan's strategic maritime interest as well as to promote the education and training”²⁷ in accordance with international standards and other requirement in the field of merchant marine and maritime safety and security. The institute, established in private sector endeavours “to impart knowledge and provide comprehensive education and training programmes to meet the fast growing demands, as well as maintaining compatibly with modern technological advancement of the marine industry.”²⁸

National Maritime Affairs Coordination Committee (NMACC) is a committee at the Ministry of Defence, constituted in 1983 subsequent to passage of UN Conventions on Law of the Sea, 1982 (UNCLOS-82).²⁹ NMACC was primed to “look into the new avenues offered by UNCLOS-82. Deliberations of the Maritime Affairs Coordination Committee first led to the establishment of a Maritime Affairs Wing in the Ministry of Defence in May 1986. Thereafter, Pakistan Maritime Security Agency was established in January 1987 for enforcement of National and International laws, policies and conventions at sea.”³⁰

Creating maritime awareness, however, is not one of the principal tasks of these institutes, except for PNWC³¹ and NCMPR.³² Moreover, all of these institutes and their academic or research activities are mostly concentrated in Karachi, leading to a lack of exposure among students or aspiring professionals in the maritime sector. There exists no mechanism whereby these institutes could join hands for enhancing much needed maritime awareness in the country.

Governmental Priorities

Government of Pakistan and the governments of both Sindh and Balochistan have prioritized investment on land, and the

investment maritime field has been missing or too narrow. Approach has caused three major problems in the maritime sector: Firstly, new projects/initiatives are not coming up (e.g., new shipyards³³ etc.), despite the fact that a 'plan' for establishment of a new shipyard was announced a few years back in 2013. Secondly, progress on old projects is extremely slow (e.g., functioning of CPEC, especially Gwadar port³⁴). According to 'Logistic Capacity Assessment (LCA)', Gwadar Port has been under-utilized for commercial import and export since its development due to reasons such as distance from the market places of the country, security and services availability, etc. Gwadar Port has so far only handled government imports of wheat grain (2008) and fertilizers (2008-2014). After being transferred to China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC), this port is only handling cargo for infrastructure development and expansion projects. During 2017, the port has only received 145 TEU (Twenty-foot Equivalent Unit) containers for port projects and no general cargo vessel."³⁵ Thirdly, investor-friendly environment is rare in the maritime sector³⁶ - though with respect to ownership and corporate taxation, Pakistan offers one of the most attractive investor environment in the world. However, corruption, nepotism and misuse of authority are some of the deep-rooted issues, which turn the investors away from Pakistan.

Successive Pakistani governments have never regarded the seas and its relevance as an important constituent of the country's long term security. They have looked at things through the prism of results immediacy (results from land-based industries and agrarian-based investment are quicker than the maritime one), relational convenience (it is relatively easier setting up industry on land) and political expediency (vote bank-based focus - since population centres are dense in Punjab, therefore, politicians prioritize investment on developments in regions away from the coast). Maritime projects, like ship-building, new ports and harbours, setting up shipping lines, development of fisheries and

coastal tourism are not undertaken as they need considerable time, funds and do not yield fruits within a single term of office of the government in power. Long term nature of these projects cause governments to make insufficient allowance for growth to maritime economics. Resultantly, Pakistani maritime industry remains underdeveloped. It is time to shift the centre of gravity of Pakistan's strategic thinking towards the south - i.e., to build sea oriented multiple economic centres.

Maritime Geopolitics

The other important aspect that requires serious analysis is the geopolitical dimension of maritime policy. Seas have been central to global political thinking since the ancient times. Features or the demarcations over land-boundaries continue to vary but seas remain as one indivisible global common.³⁷ Global commons are those places or physical entities, which are 'commonly managed' and are not owned by any particular group or country.³⁸ Julian Corbett, in his famous book *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy*, noted that land and sea are bonded together in an enduring relationship and are crucial ingredients of any military, or for that matter, national strategy.³⁹ Sea provides a medium for interaction among the international community that land cannot, therefore, the oceans of the world have long been playing an important role world's geopolitics.⁴⁰ John Hannigan in his book *The Geopolitics of Deep Oceans* suggests that contemporary maritime geopolitics can be constructed around four contexts, which are: oceanic frontiers (tapping natural sea-bed resources), governing the abyss (UN conventions on limits and jurisdiction of states; regulating use of the commons), sovereignty games (political and military strategizing for influence and control of oceans) and saving the ocean (climate change and pollution concerns).⁴¹

Indian Ocean, undeniably, is the world's most important ocean in the contemporary geopolitical setting. The ocean's significance

emanates from three reasons:⁴² firstly, the passage of approximately 100,000 vessels through every year makes the Indian Ocean the greatest conduit of trade; secondly, densely populated littorals provide opportunity for economic growth, which at the same time are vulnerable to natural disasters; and thirdly, the Indian Ocean accounts for 15% of the world's total fishing resources. Besides this enormous economic potential, the Indian Ocean's milieu has been witnessing some of the prominent politico-strategic currents. The United States dependence on the Middle Eastern oil has diminished due mainly to its own shale oil revolution.⁴³ Its chief concern in the Indian Ocean is the increasing presence of China, and the US is looking for ways to counter it.⁴⁴ Owing to its engagement in Afghanistan, Iranian nuclear concerns and Yemen crisis, the United States is not likely to distance itself from the Indian Ocean's region in the foreseeable future. In the recent National Security Strategy, the American President unequivocally declared both China and Russia as 'revisionist' states, while clearly touted India to be a security provider⁴⁵ and a regional anchor⁴⁶ for Indian Ocean region and beyond. The 'Quadrilateral Dialogue' that involves the US, Australia, Japan and India is implicitly primed at 'containment of China',⁴⁷ and this is likely to impact the maritime geopolitics of the Indian Ocean in times to come. Pakistan and China find convergence of their interests in the shape of CPEC, which would solidify Pak-China bilateral bond whilst attracting other regional countries to become part of the corridor.

Despite these prominent developments in the Indian Ocean, the Pakistani people and the policymakers are not familiar with the implications of the geopolitical flux on Pakistan's security and economy. The Indian premier had announced his maritime vision; while speaking at University of Fiji; he underscored – what has been dubbed as 'Modi Doctrine' – "vigorous pursuit of political influence through greater maritime power."⁴⁸ India's clear focus on maritime geopolitics has helped it establish footprint in the GCC states –

especially Oman and UAE – and India Ocean island states. With heavy investment in the Iranian Chahbahar Port – rivalling Gwadar – India is seeking to make Gwadar less important in the overall construct of CPEC. This calls for holistic review of Pakistan’s strategic maritime paradigm.

Nuclearization of the Indian Ocean, mainly seen in the perspective of nuclear weapons carrying submarines by India, needs substantial focus and attention by both the Pakistani government and strategic community. Deploying nuclear weapons at sea, though assures a state’s survival, yet invites questions and criticism with respect to the weapons’ command and control and ability of the weapons’ carrying platform to maintain its indiscretion.

There is a host of new factors emerging in the Indian Ocean that require oceans analysis including maritime security (piracy, terrorism and trafficking), environmental degradation, natural disasters, resource depletion and state-fragility.⁴⁹ Maritime partnerships, initiatives and protocols have been evolving to fight jointly against the common threats and shared challenges. Some of these are; US led Combined Maritime Forces’ (2004)⁵⁰ scheme for defeating terrorism, preventing piracy, encouraging regional cooperation and promoting a safe maritime environment in the Arabian Sea and Persian Gulf; Indian pioneered Indian Ocean Naval Symposium (IONS)(2008)⁵¹ for enhancing collaboration among Indian Ocean littoral states; and South African proposed Indian Ocean Rim Association (1995)⁵² for strengthening regional cooperation and sustainable development within the Indian Ocean region.

Lack of maritime awareness visibly surfaces when a political decision is sought for resource allocation for capacity building or joining an international institution. Such choices or decisions, instead of flowing from political leadership often take the reverse course – military, in the face of fluctuating external milieu, convinces the government to opt for a certain course of action. The

case in point is that Pakistan became member of IONS after six years of its institution, whereas the initiative emerged in Pakistan's neighbourhood.

The politico-strategic and security environment in Indian Ocean is now defined by one clear factor: fluidity. The term 'fluidity', in the context of this study, means that strategic interests of world powers keep changing – enhancing, lessening, converging and diverging – e.g., the US has rebalanced towards Asia-Pacific and discovery of shale oil within the US may change its dynamics in the Indian Ocean, etc. Geopolitical ambiance in the Indian Ocean demands a crucial understanding of the emerging and future scenario with its impact on Pakistan. This would help determine, with precision, any future course of action, relationships or partnerships that Pakistan may have to opt for. The underlying factor for such a proposition is possessing enhanced level of maritime awareness.

Maritime Economics

The importance of maritime economics has been emphasized by Adam Smith, who argues that access to seas and then the use of seas for commerce and trade had benefited nations more than the ones situated deep into land.⁵³ Mahan also points that travel through sea is *easy and cheap*,⁵⁴ as he believed that *on an assured availability* of sea routes or waterways a nation's long term progression depends. This unequivocally points towards having a system of transportation – uninterrupted capacity to take goods out to other markets and bring those, needed for own country. With the maritime transport, there are other avenues connected directly or indirectly, which also see development. As a consequence, maritime economics, once paid true attention to, could result in a chain reaction of prosperity and progress.

World Maritime Transport Review⁵⁵ highlights that world seaborne trade, in 2017, has grown by 2.6 per cent in one year. UN Conference

on Trade & Development (UNCTAD) estimates that seaborne trade will increase by 2.8 per cent, in 2018, with total volumes reaching 10.6 billion tons.⁵⁶ This increase is driven by a strong expansion, in particular iron ore and coal, as well as the containerized trade and LNG shipments. This provides an enormous opportunity to benefit from such an explosive realm of economic activity, but unfortunately Pakistan's dead-weight growth has been negative, i.e., it has not been able to use its own shipping to accrue advantages from the sea-borne trade. Similarly, according to UNCTAD Handbook of Statistics, 2017, Pakistan was only shown in the industry of scrapping ships rather than building.⁵⁷

Though Karachi Shipyard & Engineering Works (KS & EW) is endeavouring to resurrect on the foundation and incredible achievements of 1950-60s, yet it has a long way to go to become a competitive shipyard in the region. Financial indiscipline, poor management and drain of skilled workforce has virtually reduced the organization to a sick industrial unit. With the start of new projects, it is hoped that the Shipyard might come back on track. However, it is a sad state that despite having a capacity to build ships of up to 26000 deadweight tonnage, KS & EW does not get of international orders, primarily because of low standards of construction.

Another important factor in the maritime economy is access, extraction and use of living and non-living resources in maritime zones. One detailed survey⁵⁸ to establish the precise extent, types and kinds of fish resources was conducted in October-November 2010 aboard Norwegian vessel *R/V Dr.Fridtjof Nansen*. The survey was done after a period of 25 years. This strengthens the notion that potential of Pakistan's sea resources remains unrecognized. Generally, fish stock surveys should be carried out every year to ascertain the trends in fish production, consumption and other changes. Pakistan's fishing industry is in a dilapidated state, with poorly equipped fishing boats and inadequate processing

infrastructure, much of Pakistani fish is wasted.⁵⁹ Though Pakistan launched its first ever 'National Policy & Strategy for Fisheries and Aquaculture Development in Pakistan', in 2007, but the results on the implementation of this policy are far from visible.⁶⁰ Survey to assess potential for non-living resources, within EEZ or continental shelf, has not been done so far. However, a report from Bramley J. Murton⁶¹ makes some references to presence of valuable metals in continental shelf of Pakistan. The report suggests that Pakistan is one of the top ten countries of the world with manganese nodules around 750 tonnes per sq km. The report points out that area off the coast of Pakistan being exceptionally rich in gas hydrates. Other resources are: nodules & crusts 30 million tonnes; manganese metal 4.1 million tonnes; copper 83,000 tonnes; nickel 206,000 tonnes, cobalt 165 tonnes and oil & gas 0.5 billion barrels. The exploitation of these massive resources can only be possible where a proper maritime awareness and a will to orientate Pakistan with maritime realities exist.

Strategies for Enhancing Maritime Awareness

Despite having a long and deep history with the sea, of maritime awareness in the country remains abysmally low as noted earlier. Therefore, it is paramount to discuss some strategies to enhance maritime awareness in Pakistan. Some of these are:

Maritime Academic Pivot. To enhance maritime awareness among students and general public across Pakistan. Some measures are suggested below including some measures;

- Establishing a department, or a section within a suitable department, about maritime studies in public and private universities.
- Holding seminars/workshops on contemporary maritime issues at maritime and other institutes – PN War College, IMA, NIO

etc., – and inviting larger audience to participate (on the lines of Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) Seminar titled “Pakistan: Maritime Challenges and Opportunities”⁶²).

- Holding essay writing competitions on maritime – current and emerging issues.
- Inclusion of Pakistan’s maritime history in subjects of geography, history and social studies of secondary and higher secondary education.
- Visit of schools in rural and urban areas by professionals in the maritime realm – i.e., Pakistan/Merchant Navy Officers, Karachi Port Trust (KPT) and PNSC personnel etc., – for an informal interaction and creating awareness.
- Visit to merchant ships, Pakistan Navy ships and port infrastructure by schools/colleges/universities students – a framework for such activities can be worked out by PN/PNSC in consultation with other agencies/institutes.
- Maritime education and training – through media, for instance, start of a *Maritime TV Channel, Radio Ocean*, supplement in newspapers about Arabian Sea etc.

Maritime Institutions’ Alignment. This strategy would entail a greater coherence among the maritime institutions. A *unified maritime institute* could also be a possibility that may leverage the individual strengths of each institution and help in creating a greater maritime awareness in Pakistan. The constituents of this strategy may include:

- A unified framework for enhancing maritime awareness among people and policymakers.
- Conducting training for policymakers and general public (selected/nominated through a mechanism) – specifically on *enhancing maritime awareness*.
- Establishment of a *maritime initiative* as a joint venture for all the maritime institutions of Pakistan – that may collaborate

with the universities to enhance research and analysis activities on issues pertaining to maritime realm.

- Celebrating *Pakistan Maritime Week* – for instance in Expo centres – focusing on maritime culture, maritime industry, maritime professions etc.
- Celebrating *Arabian Sea Day* – through workshops in different cities, under the aegis of any of the maritime institutions – highlighting history, significance and relevance of Arabian Sea in contemporary era.

Governmental Maritime Orientation. This strategy focuses on orienting strategic and political thinking of the government with maritime domain. The phrases *think maritime-act maritime*, *transform Makran* and *act south* may be used to emphasize an urgent need to bring the factor of maritime sector into governmental calculus. Creating maritime awareness, in policy-making circles, necessitates the inclusion of the following:

- Through *iterative appraisal* – the government must be kept apprised by the relevant maritime institutions about the significance of focusing on maritime sector; and generating/enhancing maritime activity.
- Institutions with stakes in the maritime domain, for instance PN, PNSC, KPT etc., should adopt measure of *enduring engagement* with the government for updating geopolitical/geostrategic changes in maritime domain vis-à-vis PNSC/Navy's capacity building.
- A national maritime policy and strategy should be published every 5 years.
- After every 3 years survey of EEZ and continental shelf should be conducted.

New Maritime Initiatives. These initiatives will keep the maritime factor in the country's policies alive – thereby accumulating benefits from all possible avenues of this important domain. These include:

- Generation/enhancement of maritime activity will be central to align the cognitive focus on maritime sphere with employment opportunities. These activities should be undertaken to impress upon the policy making apparatus the significance of maritime awareness by *simultaneity of creating awareness and enhancing maritime activity* through proposals such as:
 - Investor friendly policies for shipbuilding, shipping industry and coastal tourism.
 - Facilitation and tax-exemption on maritime projects by local investors/companies.
 - Capacity building and financial support to industrial infrastructure directly or indirectly linked with shipbuilding.
 - Meaningful direction and capacity building of *Ministry of Maritime Affairs* (MoMA) – Ministry of Ports & Shipping was merely renamed as MoMA, in October 2017.⁶³ In order for this ministry to play a meaningful role MoMA should be made the lead ministry for policy making, planning and implementation of maritime economy.
 - Establishment of *National Maritime Authority* – a unified construct where all maritime stakeholders are represented in a single organization, for ease of communication with the government. This authority can issue policies, strategies for enhancing maritime awareness – and relevant policies for exploiting maritime potential of Pakistan.
 - Institution of *National Maritime University* – should be mandated with all the disciplines of maritime studies – e.g., maritime economics, sea transportation, port management, container traffic handling etc.

Conclusion

Pakistan's coastal communities have a long historical bond with the sea. The local economies have not only been dependent on the sea, they have also had been sea faring and trading through sea routes for centuries. In the last seventy years of its existence, Pakistan has not paid much attention to develop its sea resources. This lack of focus can be attributed to lack of maritime awareness among policymakers as well as the academics and the general public about the benefits that can accrue to the nation by exploiting ocean resources and developing maritime sector. Pakistan has lagged behind several states in the region in ship-building and shipping industry. In order to achieve optimum benefits from the maritime resources, Pakistan needs to make maritime development a centre piece of its over-all development strategy and developing a maritime culture which promotes maritime awareness.

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End Notes

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⁵ Google Maps, available at <https://www.google.com/maps/@28.2884817,66.1022162,5z>

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