Abstract

Maritime power includes all relevant aspects of national power both; civil and military. National maritime capabilities and potential are seen in comprehensive terms as including ports & harbours, merchant marine & maritime industry, fishing and oceanographic fleets, ocean economic resources, maritime outlook and tradition, and other aspects of national power related to sea. Whereas, maritime strategy takes care of the development and management of the elements of maritime power. Access to sea provides political, economic and military advantages to the littoral states and raises their stature in the comity of nations. However, in order to take advantage of the bounties of the seas, a nation has to evolve a comprehensive maritime strategy to be able to exploit and protect all the elements of maritime power.

Introduction

“It is He who has subjected the sea unto you, that ye may eat flesh thereof that is fresh and tender, and extract there-from ornaments to wear, and thou seest the ships therein that plough the waves that ye may seek to enrich yourself of the bounty of Allah and that ye may be grateful1.”

More than two-thirds of the earth’s surface is covered with water. All major oceans of the world are practically connected to form one whole. These oceans provide man with a seamless medium to traverse the entire length and breadth of this globe. Although human beings naturally live on land, their sustenance is crucially linked and dependent on these waters. All oceans, seas and inland waterways are a huge reservoir of food and an endless resource of organic and non-organic materials. The two most traditional usages of the seas include
the use of these waters as a source of food (fishing) and as a medium of transportation. Even today, seafoods comprise major portion of the overall human food consumption and the trend is increasing with the improvement in technology and better access to fishing techniques. Similarly, sea transport remains the most convenient and the cheapest mode of transport the world over. It is, therefore, no surprise that the humans prefer to live close to the waters and today 80% of the world’s population lives on or near the coasts and 90% of the entire world’s commerce is routed through the seas\(^2\). Moreover, the seas contain tremendous amount of resources, so important for sustenance and development of human society which include oil and gas, important minerals, food and energy. It is also the single most influential element that affects and regulates our climate and environment. Thus, the seas have a profound influence on our economic, social, cultural and military lives.

The objective of this paper is to critically analyse the importance of various elements of maritime power and their effective employment to achieve progress and prosperity for a country. The paper highlights the significance of the oceans in different aspects of human activity before clarifying the concepts of maritime power and strategy. It also explains how maritime strategy helps harness the benefits of various elements of maritime power.

**Significance of the Seas**

There have been few others like Mahan, who have tried to draw the attention of their peers to the importance of oceans in their lives. One of them was the architect of modern Soviet Navy, Admiral Gorshkov, who writes\(^3\):

“Our seas, oceans and inland waterways are of huge importance in terms of resources, the environment and conservation, trade and industry, marine sciences and leisure activity.”
The seas have been used, since time immemorial, primarily as an important resource of food, mainly fish, and as an economical and indestructible path for transportation of goods and people. However, advancements in technology promise a much wider access to the depths and widths of the seas. The increasing knowledge about the variety of sources available in these waters and their bottoms and the capability to technically exploit these precious sources has further enhanced the economic importance of seas. Technology is continually transforming the traditional knowledge and uses of the seas, being used for variety of civil and military purposes. In order to fully comprehend the scope and benefits of the seas, an effort is being made to categorize the uses of the oceans and the seas under three broad but very important aspects of human activity.

**Economic**

The foremost activity at the sea remains fishing. Sea food is one of the most preferred and healthy of the foods. Millions of individuals and their families are associated with and dependent on fishing around the world which has taken a form of a proper industry. It is estimated that over 500 million people earn their livelihood directly or indirectly through this industry. Besides catching and selling fish, the industry includes manufacturing of fishing boats and trawlers, fishing lines and nets and a variety of modern equipment which is used directly or indirectly in the process. Fish processing has also become a thriving industry which gives employment to thousands and is a source of huge revenues for many countries. New techniques and equipment are being introduced regularly giving a continuous boost to the industry and adding its contribution to the overall economic activity. Rise in population and awareness about its nutritious value is adding to the demand of fish, generating more opportunities for the coastal states and individuals related with this industry.

Another vital economic activity at sea is the marine transportation. It is said that 90% of world trade is carried out
through seas. Bigger, much faster ships, loading/unloading and storing techniques provide vast economic opportunities. The transportation through sea is not only safer, but is cheaper as well. No other medium, land or air, has the capacity to lift equivalent amount of cargo in comparable size and cost. Not only the littoral states but even the land-locked countries are also dependent on the sea for a major portion of their imports and exports. Merchant shipping is a multibillion-dollar, multinational endeavour; an estimated two million people make their livelihood from seafarings. There are other major activities associated with sea trade like ship-building and repairs, marine construction, and also the infrastructure and communications required for linking these ports with the hinterland. Thus the scale of economic activity generated through sea trade is enormous and has the capacity to alone turn the fortunes of the coastal states. Singapore and UAE are just two examples of states thriving on sea trade. The increase in the world trade, due to globalization, has become a primary factor that affects the international maritime environment.

Sea is also a significant resource for countless minerals. Many, perhaps, are still unknown to the mankind, however, the technology is opening up new vistas and human reach is becoming possible in the remoteness of ocean beds. So far, the most important and precious non-living product of the sea is petroleum. According to Professor Till, nearly one third of the oil and gas being consumed by the world comes from the seabed; Methane hydrates are the future energy resources and sea will be used more and more for energy generation as the world has learnt to exploit fluctuating tides, the movements of waves, and water temperature differentials. The economic activity being generated by transportation and use of petroleum alone is so enormous that it would be difficult to put a figure on it. Technology is opening wider and deeper oceanic areas for exploration of minerals. It is due to modern technology that Japan is endeavouring to retrieve iron from near its coast.
The oceans hold a promising future to meet the rapidly expanding needs of the people. Governments, throughout the world, are showing close interest in the deep sea, the sea-bed and its subsoil. The United States, Germany, Japan and Russia are leading the world-wide enterprise of oceanic explorations. In addition to the vast mining of oil and gas being carried out at sea, numerous other minerals and metals are also being mined from the sea-bed. As technology advances, the volume and variety of the yield from the sea would also increase. Sea water, sea-bed and subsoil of the sea carry huge potential resources of all kinds of foods, minerals, biological and chemical resources for the coastal states.

In its hunger for more and cheaper energy, mankind is turning toward the sea with renewed hopes. The potential sources of energy from the sea are numerous including the harnessing of wave-energy and the tidal movement, recovery of hydrogen from the sea water, and development of big-mass energy from biological sources of the sea. In this last category, the energy would be obtained from Kelp, the 'king of the sea weeds' which can grow by two feet per day. Even the wind generated across the coasts is indirectly a product of the sea which is being used for energy generation.

Development of ports and harbours is a catalyst in the overall economic and industrial uplift of a country. It provides impetus to economic and social activity throughout the country. Even water sports and leisure activities provided by the seas contribute enormously in the social and economic well being of the people. It is no coincidence that most of the prosperous cities and notable commercial as well as cultural centres are located astride the seas. Recreation, real estate, ocean-related occupations, and other services associated with the ocean generate an amount of $54 billion in goods and services each year. Revenue generated from the ocean is received through: food, recreation, mining, shipping, kelp (emulsifying agent used in food and pharmaceutical products), and biomedical products.
Military

The importance of the seas as a medium of warfare and influence has grown over a period of time. The earlier military use of the seas was restricted to transportation of men and material to and from the enemy coast. The actual action was to be carried out at land. However, with passage of time and proficiency in the use of boats and weapons, it was sometimes found prudent to face the enemy at the sea. In military conflict, the sea may serve as the first line of defence for some countries and for some as the last reserve of space, to fall back upon. The sea also provides logistic supply routes to the combat forces fighting on land or operating near coastal areas. Despite advancements in warfare at sea, amphibious landing remains one of the most intricate and spectacular of military actions launched from the sea. Landings at Normandy and Inchon played decisive role in the outcome of the respective battles. It is still considered as an attractive form of power projection against weaker adversaries. Seabed also provides ideal ground for installation of long range listening devices and under-water weapons.

Mobility, flexibility and reach are some of the important characteristics of all the naval forces. Sea power plays a major part in projecting power both by direct support of operations on land and by independent action at sea. Due to increased dependence of states on sea-borne trade, the protection (or interdiction) of Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) has become an important military assignment for naval forces. States are becoming more and more dependent on sea trade and any interference thereof can have serious repercussions.

Development of new weapons like the stand-off cruise missile which can be fired from any platform has made it possible for maritime forces to carryout lethal missile attacks on shore targets including the interior of the coastal cities. However, in the nuclear age, the most sought after military instrument at sea today is the submarine which provides the best assured ‘second-strike’ capability to a nuclear state.
Political

Political importance of any element or resource is essentially a product of the economic and military factors. With the indisputable economic and military importance of the oceans, their political importance is inevitable. Ability to use the sea enhances the overall freedom of a nation, particularly in case of those nations which are surrounded by hostile neighbours.

A state needs a wide variety of contacts and communications with the international community to advance its influence and aims for its political stability and national progress. The sea facilitates in promoting commercial, cultural, scientific and industrial contacts between the littoral states. When Mozambique became free from Portuguese domination, its re-establishment of trade ties with the world community was quick because of its access to the sea. Pakistani merchant ships also immediately started calling at the Mozambique ports to bring own exports to that country. The state of Rhodesia which has now become Zimbabwe, on the other hand, has been taking much longer to develop similar contacts with other countries because it is a landlocked country. Pakistan enjoys special importance for landlocked Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Afghanistan for providing access to the world through sea.

The states having access to the sea invariably tend to have a greater voice and influence in the sphere of international trade and commerce, fixing of transportation prices, allocation of tariffs and quotas, and on policies regarding shipping and turnover of trade etc. This enhances the overall economic expertise and activities of these states. Countries like Singapore, Iran, Egypt, Panama, Turkey etc. have a role to play in the international politics due to their proximity to important maritime choke points.

The sea provides a very good medium through which show of force to serve as deterrence or as a pressure tactics can be mounted. This kind of diplomacy by force or what is
sometimes called as ‘Gun-boat diplomacy’ is being frequently used by big powers as well as the regional powers. Present trends in power-politics in the international sphere, as well as availability of new kinds of weapons and naval units indicate still wider currency and applicability of the use of naval deterrent forces in support of diplomacy.

Understanding Maritime Strategy and Sea Power

Many historians have generally used the term ‘maritime strategy’ or ‘sea power’ in the military context. It is, therefore, no surprise that people tend to mix maritime/ sea power with naval power. Hence, there is a need to put the two in their correct perspective. The word ‘maritime’ is a composite term which has various elements such as ports and harbours, merchant marine, ocean economic resources and combatant naval forces. All these elements essentially contribute towards the ‘national power’ of a state. Maritime strategy is all about the sea and management of maritime assets in the best possible fashion; which brings riches and honour to the state that learns and applies these skills. The political, economic and technological environments have got a direct bearing on the maritime strategy of a nation. Sea power is broadly defined to include all relevant aspects of national power, both civil and military. National maritime capabilities and potential are seen in comprehensive terms as including ports & harbours, merchant marine & maritime industry, fishing and oceanographic fleets, ocean economic resources like fish, oil & gas, minerals etc, maritime outlook and tradition, and other aspects of national power related to sea, rather than in narrow terms of weaponry alone. A strategy to enhance national sea power accordingly promotes and coordinates all aspects of maritime activity, both civil and military in order to optimize the use of available resources. It may be said that maritime strategy is the conviction of a nation to put to use her political, social, economic and maritime assets with the aim to promote her maritime interests.

Maritime strategy determines the development of elements of sea power. It is greatly influenced by the economic, trade,
energy, defence and foreign policies amongst others. Maritime strategy therefore, regulates all the elements of sea power whereas; naval strategy deals primarily with one element i.e. the naval forces.

Naturally, there is a considerable inter-linking between the two because naval strategy is designed to protect the maritime interests of the state in peace and war. Moreover, it has the potential to support broad national objectives, particularly in the foreign policy. In the context of maritime affairs, naval forces safeguard the elements which are lucrative and open to dispute because conflicts over the treasures of the sea are bound to arise.

Therefore, despite excessive use of the term sea power, by majority of naval writers, in purely military context, this study considers sea power as an all-encompassing term which includes the ability to exploit all elements of maritime power. Although Mahan’s works revolved mainly around naval campaigns, he did realize the importance of other elements of maritime power as well. According to him\textsuperscript{14}, sea power was essential to the growth of national strength and prosperity. He identified various factors which affected the sea power of a nation which included: geographical position, size of territory and population, political institutions and national character. All proponents of sea power unanimously agree that the ascendancy of UK and USA owes primarily to their sea power. Admiral Gorshkov expresses his views on sea power in the following words\textsuperscript{15}:

\begin{quote}
“A nation’s sea power is determined not only by the weapons and armed forces with which it can affect events at sea but also by its merchant marine, its fishing and oceanographic fleets, and its maritime outlook and tradition. It is true that these civil maritime activities can become vital ingredients in a nation’s ability to exercise military power at sea, for example, when merchant ships carry troops and supplies in wartime, or trawlers and scientific vessels collect
\end{quote}
intelligence in peacetime, but they are not inherently instruments of armed force.”

How much influence sea power has had on the course of history and destiny of the nations is a matter of debate. Notwithstanding, the fact that this influence has not been constant and has varied due to various factors, it would be hard, even for the proponents of continental primacy, to reject its importance outright. As noted by Professor Till, sea power may not be required today for colonization, but many other benefits of sea power, not visible to the early writers have arisen. For example, the adoption of the United Nation’s Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has given a whole new meaning to the term sea power by giving rights and responsibilities to coastal states. One extremely relevant manifestation of sea power is the nuclear submarine with its capability of second strike. So while the means, and even the ends, may have changed; the importance of sea power and hence of maritime strategy has not diminished. The United States’ ability to invade far off lands and maintain its hegemony and control over resource rich areas of the globe is only possible because of its preponderance at sea. Having established the importance of sea power for contemporary littoral states, the need for a maritime strategy to exploit this power becomes only too obvious. Let us now discuss a few elements which are critical to the existence and exploitation of maritime power.

**Elements of Maritime Power**

“Under modern conditions, however, home trade is but a part of the business of a country bordering on the sea. Foreign necessaries or luxuries must be brought to its ports, either in its own or in foreign ships, which will return, bearing in exchange the products of the country, whether they be the fruits of the earth or the work of men’s hands; and it is the wish of every nation that this shipping business should be done by its own vessels. The ships that thus sail
to and fro must have secure ports to which to return, and must, as far as possible, be followed by the protection of their country throughout the voyage."

Maritime elements are various and listed differently by different writers. However, there are four basic elements which are essential for a state to be considered a sea power of any stature. These include ports & harbours, merchant marine, ocean economic resources and combatant force.

**Ports and Harbours**

The most fundamental constituent of maritime power is the ports. Without ports and harbours, worthwhile maritime activity cannot simply take place. The possession of ports and harbours is a significant attribute of sea power. A port offers facility for receiving ships and transferring cargo. It is, in fact, a gateway between water and land transport with services for receiving and transferring cargo as well as passengers. As such, a lot of related industrial activities take place in and around the ports, giving rise to port-industrial complexes. It may also be defined as an intermediate location in the global flow of passengers and freight. As shipments by sea account for about 90 percent of international trade by volume, sea ports are vital nodes in global supply/logistic chains, as well as in supra-national and regional trade. Naturally therefore, all ports also form focal points for economic activities and for associated industrial development.

The economic activity associated with ports can be divided into different groups. The first group involves cargo and passenger handling, storage and distribution activities as part of port function, ship repair and a number of transport-related services located in port itself and in their city centres. The second group consists of a processing industries that process imported material before their onward shipment/re-export taking advantage of the inter-modal, trans-shipment and break of bulk functions of ports. Another group of industries found in port-industrial complexes are those whose inputs
include bulk commodities imported through the port. Oil refineries and related chemical industries, iron and steel mills and sugar refineries may be included in this last category.

Mahan further explains the importance of ports in the following words:

“The seaboard of a country is one of its frontiers; and the easier the access offered by the frontier to the region beyond, in this case the sea, the greater will be the tendency of people toward intercourse with the rest of the world by it. If a country be imagined having a long seaboard, but entirely without a harbour, such a country can have no sea trade of its own, no shipping, no navy.”

The bases, ports and harbours provide berthing, repairs and numerous logistic facilities including recuperation of personnel, without which the sustained operations are not possible. The distant bases help increasing endurance and reach of combatants. Commercial ports and harbours are focal points for economic development of any state. Modern ports’ capability of handling large quantities of cargo and shipping are important assets. Finally, it is no exaggeration to say that the existence and exploitation of all other elements of maritime power depends on the availability of suitable ports.

**Merchant Marine**

Maritime nations have various interests, economic interdependence, and a heritage tied inseparably to their geography. Regular inter-continental business flights and direct world-wide communications have created fresh commercial opportunities and brought nations closer, though they still rely on the oceans to serve as a highway to commerce abroad. The stability of the world economy depends upon unhindered trade across the seas and the oceans. Today, even the most powerful world economies, like US, with vast industrial, technological, agricultural, and resource components, are not self-sufficient. Nations depend on the
continued flow of raw materials and finished products to and from different countries.

International trade plays an overwhelmingly important role in stimulating economic growth. With the onset of globalization and improvement in transportation and related services, the world economies have become ever more inter-dependent. The three mediums of transportation i.e. land, air and sea have certain advantages and shortcomings. For example, man is most comfortable on land, the latter being his natural habitat and source of sustenance. Land also allows free and sustained movement even without the use of any vehicle. However, the land is not continuous and sometimes the terrain is not very hospitable. Even with the use of vehicles, there is restriction on speed and capacity. On the other hand, the air is ubiquitous, uninterrupted, and free of terrain difficulties; it allows high speed movement in all directions without the need of preparing roads and rails. Nonetheless, despite huge technological improvements, the staying power and size of air vehicles remains limited, and the energy required to move them at high speed becomes exorbitantly expensive. In contrast, the sea is almost continuous and free of terrain difficulties, requires no road, rail or runway preparations and allows large and heavy cargos to be lifted at far less energy expenditure.

A merchant marine, under the national flag and nationally owned and manned is generally considered to be an important element of maritime power. It enables the state to ensure the maintenance of its trade; earn profits, create wealth and provide employment; besides maintaining a pool of trained seamen. All these traits are particularly important in times of national crisis, when in addition, it may be desirable for a state to requisition merchant ships for naval or auxiliary purposes. A clear example of this, is seen in the Falklands campaign where a large number of merchant ships were commissioned by the Royal Navy to augment its strength. It is also a well known fact that some countries use their merchant (and fishing) vessels for intelligence gathering and eavesdropping as well.
Having own merchant fleet of sufficient size and capability is particularly important during war and tension. Because during such periods the Flag of Convenience ships usually refuse to ply in dangerous waters or charge exorbitant fees on account of war insurance, which despite being a burden on the national exchequer, does not assure continued supplies. On such occasions, the best and only reliable solution is to have own ships able to carry vital cargo.

Hence the possession of merchant fleet is not only important for economic reasons but for the purposes of national security as well. Negligence to build and maintain own fleet could impact a state in three different ways. First and foremost would be to lack the capacity of assured supplies during peace and war. Secondly, the state will lose an opportunity to earn vital revenues from carrying cargos of other countries. And thirdly, it will have to pay exorbitant freight charges and, may be, even war insurance bills to flags of convenience.

The availability of shipping services to meet country’s foreign trade needs in war or other emergencies has been the major reason for development of merchant shipping by many countries. Though national defence requirements do not fall within normal economic considerations, they have been an important factors in development of national mercantile marine. As mentioned earlier, a war in the region or a heightened state of tension can discourage neutral foreign shipping from operating in such an area. Resulting in denial of essential services for carrying country’s trade or increased insurance premium for all cargo destined to or from a war zone. Experts have quoted five basic reasons why developing countries invest in shipping industry. These are: saving foreign exchange, reducing freight costs and consequently promoting the country’s foreign trade, earning revenues from the shipping operation, providing additional employment, and assuring adequate and reliable shipping services in peace and crisis.
Oceanic Economic Resources

Oceanic economic resources are those assets or materials, related to the oceans or seas, which help generate economic activity or contribute to the economic well being of individuals or states. Generally, this term is used to include all living and non-living organisms and materials e.g. marine animals and plants, minerals, oil and gas etc. that are found in the oceans.

The coastal areas are by far the most biologically productive zones, endowed with rich, unique natural ecosystems that can contribute significantly towards national economy and growth. It is estimated that one hectare of mangroves, if properly managed, could produce an annual yield of 100kg fish, 25kg shrimp, 15kg crab meat, 200kg mollusc, and 40kg sea cucumber, in addition to supplying indirect support for 400kg of fish and 75kg of shrimp that mature in off-shore areas. The economic wealth of coastal areas is derived from five major sources.

Products of direct economic value e.g. shrimp and finfish, which earn millions of US dollars in foreign exchange; minerals; sand mining; beach recreation and tourism that generate revenue, apart from providing support to livelihood of many rural communities along the productive natural systems.

Products of natural systems that are intangible and are not accounted for by the market economy. These are the output of economic functions performed and services provided by those systems e.g., supply of rich nutrients to support productivity of biologically diverse fauna and flora, of direct and indirect economic value to humans such as food, firewood, honey; fodder for animals, cattle and wild life.

Coast dependent activities such as coastal aquaculture, marine transport and shipping, beach related activities, tourism, ports and harbour etc.
Coastal linked activities include fish processing, agricultural activities along the coastal belt, marine coastal installations, lying of submarine cables and pipelines, ship building, power station etc.

Coastal services activities include housing, real estate, business industries and other professional services.

Thus, the total economic wealth generated by the natural systems, coast depended activities and services, contributes billions of US dollars to national Gross Natural Production (GNP). Many nations depend on the common resources of the oceans for enhancing their economic power. Since the access to the ocean is free, it allows the states to enjoy unlimited bounties offered by the ocean. Admiral Gorshkov considers seas, oceans and inland waterways to be of huge importance in terms of resources, the environment and conservation, trade and industry, marine sciences and leisure activity. He writes:

“The exploitation of the natural resources of the World Ocean, combined with the advance of science and technology making such exploitation possible, opens new vistas of economic and political integration for the socialist states of the world, widens the sphere of their international cooperation and heightens the prestige of the Soviet State in the international arena.”

Combatant Naval Force

After establishing importance of the oceans and various elements of maritime power, it becomes common understanding that a state would need a capable force to safeguard not only its sovereignty but all its assets and resources as well. It is, therefore, of paramount importance that a coastal state must possess a potent naval force to protect its maritime interests. The sea plays a crucial role in the economic, military and political affairs of a state. If adequate maritime force is not maintained, the sea can become a liability rather than an asset.
Man lives on land but the predominant support to his life comes from water. Besides the fact that the sea is inextricably linked with every aspect of man's life, the potential resources possessed by the sea are infinitely greater than those of the land. Those who can harness the resources of sea, would always have more resources at their disposal for development. It is inevitable that the nations which have the capability of controlling the sea would become the dominant nations in the world. Khairuddin Barbarossa rightly understood the importance of naval power, when after his conquest in the battle of Preveza, in 1538, he uttered his famous words:

“He who rules over the sea will undoubtedly rule over the land.”

In the recent history, natural resources of the seas have attracted great interest around the world. The land is becoming scarce of some of the traditional raw materials due over-exploitation, while the demand is still on the rise. While with advancement in technology, it is becoming increasingly possible for man to work at sea and exploit the unlimited resources, it offers. Parallel with this increase in the access and demand of marine resources goes, of course, an increase in their strategic significance\textsuperscript{26}. The conflicts over the use of ocean space arise principally from two developments: first, an explosion of technological advances in exploiting fish, petroleum, and minerals in ocean space; and second, the rising influence of developing countries in asserting their claim to the benefits of such exploitation\textsuperscript{27}. The UNCLOS has given a large area of the seas under the jurisdiction of coastal states to exploit and reap its benefits. However, mere claims and resolutions do not guarantee protection of a nation's interests. A coastal state requires a potent military force to be able to protect its interests and deter intrusion.

Notwithstanding the above, the realm of a naval force extends much beyond mere protection of maritime interests. Their unique composition and special characteristics set them apart from both, the land and air forces. Hence modern naval forces are used as military as well as political instruments in
support of national policies. Naval presence is used to provide a regional stabilizing influence, foster strong alliances, and encourage multinational friendships. Development of new weapons, the capability to strike beyond just the coastal areas, and the second strike capability, has increased the importance of navies manifold. A naval force can be engaged or disengaged easily without fear of unintended escalation. By being on the high seas or in foreign ports, a navy can communicate threats, offer reassurances, or earn prestige in a way that troops or aircraft in their home bases cannot do. Naval forces operate in an international medium and can reach and operate around the globe, besides having the capacity to sustain themselves for longer periods.

The navy remains at the core of a country’s military preparedness and war-fighting proficiency. As a team, operating around the seas, naval forces are able to shift their focus, in no time, from passive, low-profile, forward deployed operations to high-tempo crisis response. In this environment, the naval forces are expeditionary in character, a force whose flexibility, readiness, self-sustainability, and mobility is capable of preventing and, if necessary, winning regional battles, resolving crises, or serving as a vital element of joint task forces, to guard national interests. It is, therefore, considered an important element of not only the maritime power but that of the national power.

Conclusion

The progress and prosperity of mankind is crucially linked with the seas. With dwindling resources at land, the importance of seas has become manifold. The seas possess enormous opportunities as provider of food, hydrocarbons and minerals and also as the most convenient and cheapest medium of transportation. It is also the single most influential element that affects and regulates the climate and environment. Having access to sea offers political, economic and military options to the littoral and enhances its prestige in the comity of nations. The advancement in technology and the new laws facilitate the coastal states in exploiting the
resources in their maritime domain but at the same time, it is a challenge to be able to protect the maritime interests. In order to benefit from the bounties of the oceans, it is important that a nation invests in all the elements of maritime power. The management of these elements of maritime power requires a comprehensive and well thought out maritime strategy based on national goals and objectives.

Notes

1 Holy Qur’an, Surah Al-Nahl, Ayah 14.
7 http://www.usc.edu/org/seagrant/Education/Kelp/, accessed on March 5, 2014.
9 Maritime Warfare Docket (Islamabad: National Defence University, 2009), 46.
11 Ibid.
13 Anwar, op.cit., 2.
14 Mahan, op.cit., xxix.
19 Ibid., 287.
20 Mahan, op.cit., 35
21 Anwar, op.cit., 16.
25 Gorshkov, op.cit., 79.