

Chapter 2

Literature Review & Research Methodology

The MSR has been launched in end 2013 by Chinese President Xi Jinping during his visit to Indonesia and Kazakhstan. Since then the project has attracted the attention of all leading strategic study institutions/thinkers of the world to study the proposal and monitor its progress. The project has become a hot issue for discussions/debates across the world in all economic, strategic and defence forums/seminars/etc. However other than study reports articles from a few Institutions and defence watch dogs, there is not enough literature available freely to open world, as, as of now the **project is not closed and the issue is dynamic and still evolving.**

The Xinhua News Agency is the official press agency of the People's Republic of China has been actively advertising and publishing several articles and releasing press statements periodically. In addition the **Vision and Actions document on MSR issued by the National Development and Reform Commission, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China (see Appendix A) are the only official documents of China available in open market. The Press Information Bureau of Govt of India has also released official press statements periodically.**

Sakhuja & Chan (2016) have discussed various dimensions of MSR with particularly from the Indian perspective. The main issues found in the research were

security dimension, Penetration of Chinese investors in Africa, the effect of MSR on geo-politics of IOR countries.

Kaplan (2010) has discussed the relevance of Indian ocean and strategic significance of Malacca Strait and the power tussle between US and China in Indian Ocean. He also brings out why China is desperate to establish its foot hold in Indian ocean towards securing its energy needs.

Cordesman & Colley (2015) in their Report titled 'Chinese Strategy and Military Modernization in 2015: *A Comparative Analysis*' does a in-depth analysis of Chinese White paper 2015 and compare with US strategies. The white papers published by China on defence in 2010, 2013 & 2015 are reviewed with highest degree of professional acumen vis-à-vis China's economic capability and compared with US strategies. It provides a deep insight in to China's military modernization programme and capabilities.

The National Maritime Foundation of India, New Delhi primarily manned by personnel of Indian Navy, has published few publications (articles, books and journals). Similarly other Institutions namely Institute of Defence and Strategic Analysis, New Delhi, United Services Institute, New Delhi and Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi have published few articles on related issues. These articles discuss day to day progress or developments related to MSR and China's troubled relations with neighbor states specially in South China sea.

Apart from above, scholarly articles/ analysis, policy papers, workshop reports by reputed international strategic institutions like Institute of Chinese Studies , South Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi, S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies (RSIS), Nanyang Technological

University in Singapore, United Nations Conference on Trade & Development (UNCTD) : Investment Guide to Silk Road, Geneva 2014, The Rethink Institute, Washington USA, Institute of South Asian Studies, National University of Singapore, The French Institute of International Relations & OCP Policy Centre, The policy paper of the Polish Institute of International Affairs, The Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies New Delhi, The Arctic Institute, Centre for Circumpolar Security Studies Washington, Future Directions International, Australia, US Energy Information Administration, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations, Policy research working paper of the World Bank Development Research Group, Centre for Strategic and International Studies, US Energy Information Administration etc examine the intent of China very closely and comment on each and every move of China from the security, strategic and economic perspectives.

As the issue is complex and still developing, any comprehensive study or literature is not yet available on the outcome of the project. However a search on websites of various international study institutions reveal that some institutions have done notable study and continue to monitor the progress closely.

Research Methodology

Scope of the Study

The Maritime Silk Route (MSR) is part of China's grand project 'One Belt One Road'. Considering the enormity of the project and time frame, the study is restricted to MSR only.

Research Approach

As brought out above, the issue is recent (started since end 2013) and involve numerous countries spread across continents and therefore is still developing. As the subject is sensitive from the geo-security, geo-economy and geo-political angles, there is not enough information available in open source. Qualitative approach for getting in-depth details of issues (selected under objectives) with the help of interviews was explored. However as the issue is sensitive and still developing, the same could not be undertaken.

Data Source

Due to the reasons brought out above, data is collected on the basis of Primary (Govt of India and Govt of People's Republic of China documents) and secondary data published by the selected strategic study institutions in the form of articles, journals, book, and website reports and articles written by distinguished observers/analysts/columnists and news published in reputed dailies and periodicals. The opinions/perceptions of key functionaries/professionals gathered during informal discussions have also been considered while finalizing the report.

Time Period of Study

The development of the issue up to Feb 2016 only is taken in to account for study and any changes/improvements occurred after that have not been considered.

Limitations/Delimitations

The MSR is part of OBOR of China. However considering the enormity of the subject and available time frame, only MSR (i.e project related to sea route) is

selected for the study. As the issue is sensitive and involve national security issues and the project is still evolving the planned interviews could not be undertaken and therefore data collected only from primary and secondary sources is relied upon.