

INDIA AND INDONESIA: CONSTRUCTING A MARITIME PARTNERSHIP



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Joint Roundtable by ISEAS and ISAS

India and Indonesia: Constructing a Maritime Partnership

9 April 2019

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CONTENTS

Executive Summary	3
Maritime Potential in India-Indonesia Relations	6
Geopolitical Perspectives on the Indo-Pacific	9
India-Indonesia Maritime Strategies	14
India-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation	19
Appendix 1: List of Participants	25
Appendix 2: About the Editors	29

Executive Summary

Although Indonesia and India are neighbours in the Indo-Pacific region with deep historical and cultural linkages and a shared colonial past, there has been little cooperation between them in the maritime domain. In recent years, however, that has begun to change amidst the growing political engagement between the two nations consonant with the construction of a maritime partnership.

This maritime partnership between India and Indonesia is shaping up in the shared Indo-Pacific, which is under intense scrutiny as a geopolitical construct. This partnership – premised on security and economic cooperation – is bound to be critical as the Indo-Pacific region is increasingly disruptive and turbulent.

Against this backdrop, the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and the ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute organised a roundtable titled ‘India and Indonesia: Constructing a Maritime Partnership’ in Singapore on 9 April 2019.

The primary objective of this roundtable was to review the emerging maritime partnership between Jakarta and Delhi, and to assess its prospects through three different lenses: geopolitical perspectives; maritime strategies; and projects for bilateral cooperation. By providing both Indian and Indonesian perspectives, this closed-door discussion aimed to shed light on the new opportunities and enduring constraints that set the pace for a potentially consequential maritime engagement between two key Indo-Pacific nations. Some of the salient points to emerge from the roundtable are as follows:

1. The uncertainty created by the rise of China and the Sino-American strategic rivalry has precipitated the urgency for countries such as Indonesia to step up and play an active role in the Indo-Pacific.
2. There is reluctance among members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) about the Indo-Pacific concept and fears that it could compromise ASEAN centrality. Indonesia can act as an interlocutor to harmonise ASEAN with the Indo-Pacific.
3. The Indonesian approach to the Indo-Pacific is one of building blocks, which involves utilising existing mechanisms and platforms, such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), for cooperation and collaboration. Bilateral, minilateral and multilateral forums can all be used to embrace the Indo-Pacific concept.
4. India and Indonesia share many similarities in their history, political systems and ideologies, economic strength and maritime perspectives such as on the Indo-Pacific. However, there are nuanced differences in their strategies vis-à-vis the Indo-Pacific, which could marginally affect their maritime cooperation.
5. In the maritime space, strategies and synergies are not possible without capacities and capabilities. Enhancing political trust is an important aspect for improving India-Indonesia maritime cooperation.
6. Although the Indo-Pacific is often viewed through a geopolitical lens, it also has a geo-economic aspect. This is based on the primacy of commerce, energy and resources located between the Indian and Pacific oceans.

7. There is a critical lack of direct connectivity in commercial shipping between India and Indonesia, which needs to be rectified to improve maritime cooperation in economic terms.

8. There is a need to translate the bilateral maritime vision of the Indo-Pacific into practical action by taking incremental steps in the two main areas of economics and security cooperation.

Maritime Potential in India-Indonesia Relations

The bilateral interactions between India and Indonesia, the two largest powers in their respective regions, stretch back several millennia, primarily driven by the thriving maritime relationship across the Indian Ocean. While there is still much to be understood about these historical links, it is indisputable that these historical interactions have resulted in India and Indonesia sharing many similar cultural and religious traditions. As elsewhere in Asia, it was the advent of European imperialism that disrupted these ties. India and Indonesia were both victims of colonialism and supported each other's struggle for independence after the Second World War. Following independence, they were both advocates of the Non-Aligned Movement and, since then, have championed the rights and interests of countries in the developing world.

India and Indonesia have also had their differences and their development pathways have differed. In recent years, bilateral ties have been marked by certain aloofness, probably as a result of preoccupations with their own vast regions. At the national level, the continental mindset of Delhi and Jakarta meant that the waters around them were long ignored. Today, the bilateral relationship has warmed up considerably, namely, in the maritime domain where India and Indonesia are confronted with similar issues like piracy, illegal fishing and maritime disasters. India talks about the Indo-Pacific and SAGAR (Security and Growth for All in the Region) and Indonesia talks about the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF). There is a fundamental change in the way the two look at the world around them, making the maritime dimension very important.

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Other factors drawing the two countries together are their trillion-dollar economies. Along with their economic size, the

orientation of India and Indonesia is now outwards, which, in turn, provides the inevitable logic for greater interactions between the two regions. It is not just India that is growing well, but also countries such as Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. This potential of the entire eastern subcontinent provides a basis for thinking about the shared geography in more imaginative ways than done before. The time has come to reimagine and revitalise the bilateral maritime relationship.

The logic of Chinese expansion means that countries like India and Indonesia need to adopt a fresh look at what binds them together.

Other factors like the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative have compelled India and Indonesia to rethink the historical maritime connectivity that exists such as the Silk Route cutting through Southeast Asia, and going to India and beyond, or the overland routes. The logic of Chinese expansion means that countries like India and Indonesia need to adopt a fresh look at what binds them together. The two sides have mutual institutional relationships through the ASEAN Regional Forum, the EAS, the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and the Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation. The focus has been on institutional linkages rather than on substantive, practical engagement outside of them. On top of it all, the Indo-Pacific is the geographical framework that will reshape the regional discourse.

More broadly, as key members of the Indo-Pacific region, India and Indonesia are both confronted with the strategic rivalry among the two great powers, China and the United States (US). The strategic rivalry will encompass the region and they will no longer be the tranquil backwaters that they have been for several decades. While the Indo-Pacific is looked at in abstracts, the waters nearby such as the Bay of Bengal and the Straits of Malacca are becoming more contested. While the Indo-Pacific seems new, in the post-colonial, pre-ASEAN world, India, Sri Lanka and Indonesia (the Colombo Powers) were the first to talk about Asia as a coherent entity. Much of that dissipated due to several reasons but those ideas are

now returning and will form the basis for further academic and policy-related discussion.

Bilateral cooperation is important because the nature of regions is changing. South and Southeast Asia have traditionally looked their different ways but today, they will have a lot more to do with each other. India and Indonesia were always linked by the Indian Ocean and now, the Indo-Pacific, but it is only now that the nature of that linkage is coming into view and thrust into the spotlight. Bilateral maritime cooperation between India and Indonesia in their respective sub-regions has the potential to fashion the Indo-Pacific into a dynamic region of peace, stability and prosperity for all its people.

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Geopolitical Perspectives on the Indo-Pacific

Many of the strategic changes in the Indo-Pacific have occurred due to China's rise and, simultaneously, the region's rise, which has shifted the regional balance of power in both economic and political terms. This has engendered repercussions for the region especially vis-à-vis the role of the US, which will not accept second place in the region. This has also led to imbalances and instability for the region, which have rarely been witnessed in over half a century.

There is uncertainty about Chinese intentions and motivations, and its future strategic development. ASEAN, with its step-by-step development, may not be fully prepared for the uncertainty in the region. It is as yet unclear what China would like to do, going by the last two years of Chinese activities in the South China Sea and its assertive gestures. This could, however, catch ASEAN off guard.

ASEAN has tried to overcome the uncertainty brought about by China's assertive regional behaviour through enacting the Code of Conduct (CoC). It is unclear at this point on whether China will adhere to a binding CoC that seeks to regulate the behaviour of claimants in the South China Sea.

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China's actions will determine whether it can be trusted to play a moderating role in regional affairs, but for now, the judgement is out on this. Internal factors within China would need to be considered as well such as concerns over Chinese President Xi Jinping's rule to make better sense of his country's outward behaviour.

The decline of the US is felt acutely in the region and it is not all related to American President Donald Trump. It is unclear how much the region can depend on the US in the future.

Despite the US instituting the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA) last year to reassure the region of American presence, it may not be worth much since the US president may change his mind. The US-China trade disputes and other tensions like the development of high-level technology have added to the pressures inflicting the Indo-Pacific region.

As a middle power country, Indonesia has a role to play in helping the international community to avert conflict. This includes advancing the idea of the Indo-Pacific, though not much progress has been made and a lot more has to be done. There has been a sea change in Indonesian foreign policy under President Joko Widodo (Jokowi), especially in the recent years as the geopolitical imperatives cannot be avoided anymore. Indonesia's role is especially important in terms of getting ASEAN on board with the Indo-Pacific concept.

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Indonesia's current foreign policy outlook does not have an ASEAN-first policy. Many in ASEAN are reluctant to entertain the Indo-Pacific concept due to the fact that ASEAN centrality may be compromised again. Indonesia is, therefore, getting much more active in convincing ASEAN that the Indo-Pacific will not displace ASEAN centrality. It is seeking to become the interlocutor for the great powers and gain their trust. That India is a new force in the region means ASEAN needs to cultivate better relations with India.

India and Indonesia share a historical background in that they both played a role in the defeat of the imperialist powers (Britain in India and the Netherlands in Indonesia) as well as Asia's first imperialist power in the modern era, Japan. There is also considerable common ground between India and Indonesia, which underpin any roles that they may play in the Asia-Pacific, Southeast Asia or the Indo-Pacific.

Both India and Indonesia are anti-imperialist, nationalist, pluralist and democratic republics. They are the originators of the idea of the Asian identity and resurgence. The two countries are also the largest, most populous and successful democracies in Asia. They also have buoyant economies. India and Indonesia share a rich civilisational inheritance with unique similarities in social structures and unity in diversity. They are both lands of deep faith and worship, home to all religions and freedom of religious practice.

As nation-states, India and Indonesia are defined as geographically-satiated powers and, therefore, critical actors for regional peace. They do not seek to usurp anything outside their sovereign space but are equally determined to defend with irrevocable resolve their national patrimony and territorial integrity.

Today, the domestic political and economic discourses of both India and Indonesia largely coincide with a focus on economic nationalism especially during elections and a similar stance on mercantilist policies encouraging inward trade and investment.

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In the Indo-Pacific, India and Indonesia are crucial for Asia's strategic balance as, historically, they are likely to oppose attempts to impose imperialist hegemony on the destinies of their free people. In almost every dimension of national progress, India and Indonesia have defied the myth of Asian values which have often been utilised to deny freedom of religion, economic liberty and other societal freedoms.

The maritime policies of India (SAGAR) and Indonesia (GMF) coincide in the thinking of their governments on the Indo-Pacific, including the three pillars of strategic equilibrium, equitable cooperation, and a rules-based regional international order.

India and Indonesia are finally waking up to their proximity as maritime neighbours. The language used in the official statements by both sides is interchangeable and there is no difference on connectivity issues. Moreover, Indonesia is an important pillar of India's 'Act East' policy. Under India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, more is being done to enhance bilateral ties with his counterpart, President Jokowi.

The Indo-Pacific also has a much larger scope and at least three distinct theatres for strategic balancing: Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean/South Asia. In Northeast Asia, there is great amount of deterrence and, therefore, balance. In Southeast Asia, there is a great imbalance. In the Indian Ocean, India is currently predominant but deterrence needs to be bolstered. Since the decline of ASEAN coherence in 2012 and its lack of collective security arrangements, ASEAN's security posture appears to be severely constrained. Both India and Indonesia feel there is a clear and pressing need to reduce ASEAN vulnerability and increase ASEAN unity. ASEAN centrality does not mean acquiescence with China's presumptive right to regional dominance. Rather, ASEAN's true centrality lies in holding up a rules-based multipolar order.

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The perspectives of India and Indonesia on the Indo-Pacific are largely similar, though there are nuanced differences in strategies adopted, which reflect national circumstances, and economic and military power. Indonesia's approach to the Indo-Pacific appears to be primarily based on diplomacy and invocations of normative international law. This does not address pressing strategic issues including the South China Sea. Indonesia needs to consider whether basing its security posture on multilateral principles will suffice or will more be required for achieving stable balances in the Indo-Pacific through regional partnerships.

As middle powers, India and Indonesia will be hard pressed for diplomatic leverages, economic resources, and military power. As long as both countries stay true to the foundational principles of national sovereignty and political independence, it is likely that Asia will return to its natural state of multi-polarity, in which no single power dominates.

Meanwhile, India is seeking regional partnerships, and countervailing solutions to regional imbalances. Its outreach to Indonesia signals that intent. As middle powers, India and Indonesia will be hard pressed for diplomatic leverages, economic resources, and military power. As long as both countries stay true to the foundational principles of national sovereignty and political independence, it is likely that Asia will return to its natural state of multi-polarity, in which no single power dominates.

The globalist era is over and it is time to return to national independence. The natural order for Asia is the sovereign states of Asia. This is the way Asia will go and the US will remain in the region.

India and Indonesia have largely settled their maritime boundaries. When the EAS was conceived in 2005, Indonesia had insisted to include India, partly because the two countries shared an oceanic boundary.

The situation is ripe for Indonesia and India to undertake practical steps in order to create a structure of collaboration. India, on its part, prefers something looser in terms of a framework in the Indian Ocean, although it remains open to strengthening India-ASEAN defence cooperation.

In the eastern Indian Ocean, unlike in the South China Sea, the territorial disputes in the Bay of Bengal have been resolved. However, what it lacks is a sound and solid architecture. Indonesia traditionally has not paid attention to the Indian Ocean driven by the belief that India will secure that flank. However, given the increasing importance of maritime affairs to the national conscience, it is now more imperative for Indonesia to strengthen its relationship with India.

India-Indonesia Maritime Strategies

Maritime strategies and synergies are synonymous with capacities and capabilities. For example, Europe may be a player in the Indo-Pacific but it does not have a strategy in the Indo-Pacific due to the lack of capacity and capability. Today, both India and Indonesia are slowly building capacities and capabilities but India is slightly ahead. There is a China factor in the backdrop of this growth but it is not the only factor. China does not have good maritime geography as it cannot break out from the seas into the oceans.

India and Indonesia grew close after independence but the relationship stagnated thereafter, only picking up again in the last decade. Given the linkages of the past, it is natural that the bilateral relationship will have a strong maritime component. The two countries are essentially maritime nations – Indonesia is the world’s largest archipelagic nation and India is the only country with an ocean named after it.

Yet, neither India nor Indonesia has been a sea power in the classical sense of real military power. Both countries share an inclusive view of the Indo-Pacific and are concerned with maritime safety and security. In understanding the maritime dimension, the 70-80-90 rule is indicative: 70 per cent of the earth is covered by water, 80 per cent of people live within 200 kilometres of the sea shore and 90 per cent of global trade passes through water. Oceans are interconnected and at the heart of sea power. Oceans are also vast and navies are expensive.

The two oceans of Indo-Pacific are not very well connected. There are only four narrow straits which the Pacific and Indian Oceans connect, and all of them lie in and around Indonesia. For that reason alone, Indonesia becomes the linchpin for any Indo-Pacific theoretical construct. It is but natural that

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as sub-regional leaders of the Indo-Pacific, Indonesia and Southeast Asia to some degree, and India and South Asia to some degree, should be able to focus their energies in seeking synergies.

India and Indonesia need to synergise their aspirations and it is not China which is bringing them together. There is no sensitivity between India and Indonesia. After the Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono presidency elevated ties to a strategic partnership, positive momentum has been gathered by the warm relationship between President Jokowi and Prime Minister Modi. Both countries should leverage such positivity through practical collaboration in areas like tourism and the digital economy, in areas such as Andaman and Nicobar. For example, Indonesia is exploring co-opting Singapore to improve tourism for Indian tourists. By building from the ground up, this could transpire into a more dynamic bilateral relationship.

India and Indonesia can cooperate in several areas such as joint equipment development, intelligence and information sharing, anti-submarine warfare, aviation coordinated patrols, and port development. The fundamental requirement is to develop trust. They can also cooperate bilaterally in multilateral fora and build upon the socio-cultural aspect as both countries do not know each other too well. Within the ASEAN framework, efforts have been made to collaborate with India in areas such as counterterrorism.

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The Indo-Pacific is actually geo-economic in nature and the fact that there are geopolitical issues is a complication. There is a huge dependence of the Western Pacific economies on the Indian Ocean Region for energy security as well as resources, markets and investment opportunities that underdeveloped and developing countries in the Indian Ocean littoral offer, including access to Africa.

One of the key reasons Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe pushed for Indo-Pacific security is that every country wants stability in this large expanse of water. China should be the country that most wants stability but it has gone about it the wrong way and created instability instead, causing a backlash. There is also a lot of extra-regional trade in the Indo-Pacific as well, making the movement of trade seemingly vulnerable.

It is important for India and Indonesia to be on the same page and there has been much progress lately. The two sides had the first bilateral navy exercise – Samudra Shakti – in November 2018. Prior to this, India and Indonesia only had coordinated patrols and multilateral exercises such as MILAN.

India's maritime strategy is not confined to the Indo-Pacific, which has as many as seven regions from the Middle East to the coast of Africa, the Central Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, and Oceania. After independence, the Indian navy has seen balanced, sustained growth and is now a three-dimensional blue water force with aircraft carriers and submarines that can respond right across the Indo-Pacific (certainly in the Indian Ocean and, if required, into the Pacific).

India also has an advantage of being seen as a benign power, a force for good, and can be considered to be a security provider. This is how India sees itself and how it hopes to be seen by others. By virtue of its extensive deployment, the Indian navy is today moving into its areas of primary and secondary interest which includes ensuring freedom of navigation like in the South China Sea. The navy has also attempted to integrate the ocean through the MILAN exercise and the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium.

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With its estimated 17,000 islands, Indonesia is a maritime nation that is continentally obsessed. However, it was really under Jokowi that there was a distinct effort on the part

of the Indonesian leadership to make the country look to the sea, beyond inter-island issues. The Indonesian navy has also come a long way since independence through its professionalisation, and is poised for further growth depending on political will.

The fundamental requirement for India and Indonesia is trust and they are poised for a fruitful maritime future. Whilst common objectives have been spelt out clearly, fleshing out policy and implementing the same will remain a challenge.

The fundamental requirement for India and Indonesia is trust and they are poised for a fruitful maritime future. Whilst common objectives have been spelt out clearly, fleshing out policy and implementing the same will remain a challenge. The two sides will understandably have nuances in their approach to the geopolitical situation. For example, India's conception of the Indo-Pacific is much larger than that of Indonesia. Maritime strategies, defined by interests, will naturally vary but a common strategy for a defined area of interest is very much possible, once trust is created and mutual advantage identified. Strategies can be bilateral or multilateral and India and Indonesia can be bilaterally aligned in multilateral forums.

Moreover, the strategic aspect has sometimes been overemphasised and, therefore, the economic aspects should be considered as well. Beyond that, the social and cultural aspects should also be considered. The people from both India and Indonesia need to know each other better. Studies of the other side in both countries are lacking. For example, Indonesians lack knowledge about modern India. In some regions, like Java, the historical links have been internalised and are now considered Indonesian rather than Indian.

In maritime connectivity, Indonesia currently has the GMF and Tol Laut (maritime highway) initiatives. Tol Laut connects ports in Jakarta and Surabaya to the eastern and western parts of Indonesia. These initiatives are subsidised by the Indonesian government. The problem, however, is that the returning cargo is low in number and so needs to be improved. On the

south side, 20 ports have been established. Meanwhile, India has Sagarmala but there is no direct maritime connectivity with Indonesia.

Suggestions for improvement include the development of shipping channels, appointment of an Ambassador-at-Large as a bilateral chief negotiator and the setting up of shipping chambers, establishing a 'sister port' agreement due to West Sumatran ports having no direct connection with those in Chennai, and promoting the IORA beyond just the secretariat level.

Although institutions such as the IORA could be used for trans-regional port agreements, the Indo-Pacific is such a large entity that any attempt at an 'umbrella organisation' to cover the entire region is highly unlikely to work due to an absence of shared interests. India and Indonesia, being in the centre of the Indo-Pacific, have been engaged in dialogues with many partners. Instead, small bilateral, trilateral or minilateral initiatives would work better on the ground instead of the larger multilateral ones.

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India-Indonesia Maritime Cooperation

As early as 1951, India and Indonesia signed a peace and friendship treaty, with the implicit understanding of cooperation. From 1955 to 1957, bilateral air force and army agreements were also signed but things fell apart thereafter. India soon began to withdraw itself from regional affairs, preferring instead a more globalist non-aligned outlook. In contrast, Indonesia transitioned from a global to a regional outlook.

While there is a high-level political commitment in both Jakarta and Delhi to enhance India-Indonesia maritime cooperation, the challenge is in the practical implementation.

Today, there is a recognition that India and Indonesia need to work together due to the increasingly contested nature of surrounding waters. Both countries understand that despite there being alliances or preferences with the US and China, the fate of the region cannot be left to them and the vagaries of their domestic politics. While there is a high-level political commitment in both Jakarta and Delhi to enhance India-Indonesia maritime cooperation, the challenge is in the practical implementation.

Delhi still holds a land-bound inclination. Even with Prime Minister Modi, who appreciates sea power, it has been very hard to increase the budget allocation towards the maritime space. Indonesia has a similar constraint. However, both India and Indonesia recognise the need to secure the maritime space themselves and would be averse to other countries providing the maritime security instead.

The reality is that, if there is a vacuum, countries will do what is in their best interests. There is a maritime imperative for India and Indonesia to formulate a framework themselves rather than external powers creating such a framework in their interests. This core idea is reflected in the 'Shared Vision on Maritime Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific between India and Indonesia' – a bilateral document that was signed

by President Jokowi and Prime Minister Modi in 2018. It highlights the convergence of interests and lays out six primary areas of cooperation between India and Indonesia. These are trade and investment, sustainable development of marine resources, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), tourism and cultural exchanges, maritime safety and security, and science and technology.

The question then is how do they translate this 'vision' into reality? There is far too much emphasis on the definition/grand picture of the Indo-Pacific, including questions such as the inclusion of the African coast. However, this does not make a difference on the ground and steps need to be taken for practical cooperation. There are two dimensions of note: strategic economic cooperation and defence/security cooperation.

From a geographical outlook, the focus should not be on the whole Indo-Pacific, but on smaller, localised areas such as the Andaman Islands. Small practical steps to collaborate on the ground at the local level will create a habit of cooperation which currently does not exist. If India takes even small unilateral actions, it can have an impact and make a big difference. For example, a visa on arrival in Port Blair could dramatically transform the tourism potential of the Andaman Sea within Southeast Asia. India's membership of several ASEAN-led mechanisms helps to strengthen cooperation between India and Indonesia.

On security, India and Indonesia can think of areas of cooperation such as trilateral exercises, HADR and maritime domain awareness. Naval talks are ongoing between the two countries along with biannual coordinated patrols. These practical steps do not require much political investment and can lead to better partnerships. For example, Sabang in Indonesia and Port Blair in the Andaman can collaborate

more to create synergies. Similarly, the health of oceans and sustainability of resources are important issues today.

India and Indonesia have elevated their Strategic Partnership in 2005 to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership in 2018. Both sides have emphasised the importance of the maritime aspect. When President Jokowi made a state visit to India, a joint document was released on maritime cooperation, and when Prime Minister Modi visited Jakarta, the 'Shared Vision' document was released. Both have stressed that they are maritime partners, beyond just a geographical reality. The emphasis goes beyond shared culture and heritage, to value and interests, and shared outlooks on strategic autonomy, rules-based orders. Both countries share similar perceptions of the evolving and disruptive maritime environment in the region and world at large.

India and Indonesia maritime cooperation has many layers of cooperation, at the bilateral, minilateral and multilateral levels.

India and Indonesia maritime cooperation has many layers of cooperation, at the bilateral, minilateral and multilateral levels. They have a similar outlook on the need for an open, inclusive and rules-based Indo-Pacific. Both Indonesia and India recognise the importance of ASEAN centrality and unity in Indo-Pacific architecture. While India has its 'Act East' and SAGAR policies, Indonesia has its ocean and GMF policies. Indonesia's policy is based on ocean law from much earlier and has nothing to do with the rise of China or geopolitical competition. The Wawasan Nusantara or 'archipelagic outlook' has existed since 1957 and Indonesia was at the forefront of passing the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982. Yet, throughout the New Order period, which is synonymous with the rule of former President Suharto, Indonesia's outlook was army dominated and continental-based and the focus was on the control of the land and the population. It was only after the end of the New Order that it began to look outward to harness resources such as fishing. Transnational issues like piracy and crime also hastened the

outward orientation. The GMF is linked to Indonesia's identity as the name 'Nusantara' means 'land in between' because it faces both the Indian and Pacific oceans.

To be sure, Indonesia's interests are not limited to the areas around Japan, Australia and India. President Jokowi indicated that the focus is on trying to find new markets, such as in Africa. On the geostrategic front, what concerns Indonesia is not the threat of invasion from China but rather transnational security threats like terrorism and extremism from West Asia by sea and land, and terrorists returning to Indonesia.

The areas of cooperation highlighted in the Shared Vision are similar in nature to the IORA. Indonesia hosted the first IORA summit in 2015. The IORA cooperation is similar to India-Indonesia bilateral cooperation with cross-cutting issues of blue economy and women's empowerment.

On the Indo-Pacific, India and Indonesia have had naval talks which are now in their eighth year and the two countries have participated in coordinated patrols known as CORPATs which are in their 16th year. In December 2018, the BAKAMLA (Indonesian Maritime Security Agency) and the Indian Coast Guard met and joint training and capacity building was planned. On the issue of an Indian base at Sabang, it is not possible since it goes against Indonesia's foreign policy doctrine. Strengthening trade links between Sabang in Indonesia and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands is, however, very important. In November 2018, an India-Indonesia seminar was held in Sabang. Later, a pioneer voyage by the ship KM Aceh Millennium brought cargo (such as vegetables, spices, areca nuts, coconuts, and rice) from Sabang to Port Blair. However, the boat returned empty to Sabang, which is a problem that needs to be solved.

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Importantly, KEMLU (Indonesian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) has established a Centre for IORA Studies at Universitas Andalas and a Centre for India-Indo-Pacific Studies at Universitas Padang. India and Indonesia can also cooperate on antiterrorism and there are already some exchanges of information taking place.

On strengthening cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, India and Indonesia are pivotal players in strengthening the Indian Ocean, which is lagging behind the Asia-Pacific. India's membership in ASEAN-led forums is an important facet for regional cooperation. India attended a high-level dialogue on the Indo-Pacific organised by KEMLU in Jakarta on 20 March 2019, where the ASEAN outlook on a peaceful and prosperous Indo-Pacific was highlighted.

The Indonesian perspective on the Indo-Pacific is that a 'building block' approach is necessary for India-Indonesia cooperation which includes seeking commonalities or synergies and stressing ASEAN centrality.

The Indonesian perspective on the Indo-Pacific is that a 'building block' approach is necessary for India-Indonesia cooperation which includes seeking commonalities or synergies and stressing ASEAN centrality. Existing mechanisms such as the EAS should be used as the main platform, rather than creating new mechanisms. The overarching forums such as the EAS and the IORA can be used for minilateralist discussion, but bilateral cooperation will still be required for the longer term. Sub-regions with common interests such as the eastern Indian Ocean also need to be focused on, as a matter of priority.

The pace of growth of India-Indonesia relations has been satisfactory and consistent. There is no area in which progress has not been made. The bilateral economic relationship is healthy. India's trade with Indonesia (regardless of trade passing through Singapore) is twice that of India's trade with Japan. In terms of private sector engagement, the two major investments are the Indonesian companies of Indo Ispat

and Indorama. There are, however, problems triggered by economic nationalism. Both India and Indonesia are learning how fast the region is changing and the depth of the China impact. Nothing has, however, shaped the Indo-Pacific more than India's entry into the EAS, at ASEAN's behest, in 2005.

Appendix 1

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Appendix 2

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His research focuses on foreign policy analysis, with a penchant for neoclassical realist theory, small states, middle powers, and third world security. Specifically, Mustafa researches, writes and comments on issues related to foreign relations of Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Brunei. He also keeps a close watch on party politics in Singapore and Malaysia.

At ISAS, Mustafa looks at contemporary relations of the South Asian countries and maritime Southeast Asia through the lens of geopolitics, defence and security, and international relations.

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Mr Ankush Ajay Wagle is a Research Analyst at the Institute of South Asian Studies (ISAS) of the National University of Singapore (NUS). Ankush graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, International Relations and Economics from the University of Western Australia (UWA). Prior to joining ISAS, Ankush completed internships at the Asia-Europe Foundation in Singapore and Youth Affairs Council of Western Australia in Perth. He has also participated in the Kennedy-Lugar Youth Exchange and Study Program of the American Field Service. His research focuses on Indian foreign policy and international relations between the South Asian and South East Asian regions.

Ankush will be pursuing a Master in Public Policy (MPP) programme at the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy of the National University of Singapore (NUS) in 2019.

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