

What is Necklace of Diamonds Strategy?

Necklace of Diamonds Strategy: China is increasing its presence in the Indian Ocean over the past few years through its Debt Trap Diplomacy and Strings of Pearls strategy to contain Indian hold in the Indian Ocean.

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JUN 18, 2020 10:41 IST



Representational Image: Necklace of Diamond Strategy

Over the past few years, China is expanding its footprint in the Indian Ocean through its 'Debt Trap Diplomacy' and 'String of Pearls Strategy'. Recent satellite images have suggested that China has been modernising its Djibouti military base. Through its debt trap policy, China lures the strategically located nations around India to borrow infrastructural loans. Once the nations are indebted, China pressurizes them to support its geostrategic interests.

Through its String of Pearls strategy, China is expanding its footprints to contain Indian hold in the Indian ocean. It is creating a ring around India through strategically placed nations such as at Chittagong (Bangladesh), at

Karachi, Gwadar port (Pakistan) and at Colombo, Hambantota (both in Sri Lanka) and other facilities.

Necklace of Diamonds Strategy

In a counter-action, India has started working on the 'Necklace of Diamonds' strategy. This strategy aims at garlanding China or in simple words, the counter encirclement strategy. India is expanding its naval bases and is also improving relations with strategically placed countries to counter China's strategies.

India's Strategic Bases

1- Changi Naval Base, Singapore: In 2018, Prime Minister Modi signed an agreement with Singapore. The agreement has provided direct access to this base to the Indian Navy. While sailing through the South China Sea, the Indian Navy can refuel and rearm its ship through this base.

2- Sabang Port, Indonesia: In 2018, India got the military access to Sabang Port which is located right at the entrance of Malacca Strait. This strait is one of the world's famous choke point. A large chunk of trade and crude oil passes on to China through this region.

3- Duqm Port, Oman: In 2018, India got another military access after Sabang Port in Indonesia. The Duqm Port is located on the south-eastern seaboard of Oman. The port facilitates India's crude imports from the Persian Gulf. In addition to this, Indian facility is located right between the two important Chinese pearls-- Djibouti in Africa and Gwadar in Pakistan.

4- Assumption Island, Seychelles: In 2015, India and Seychelles agreed upon the development of the naval base in this region. This gives the military access to India. This base is of strategic importance to India as China desperately wants to increase its presence in the African continent through the maritime silk route.

5- Chabahar Port, Iran: In 2016, Prime Minister Modi signed an agreement to built this port. The port provides access to Afghanistan and an important trade route to Central Asia.

India's Strategic Cooperation

Apart from getting direct access to the strategically placed naval bases, India is also developing new naval bases, developing the old bases and is enhancing relations with other nations to garland China.

1- Mongolia: Prime Minister Modi is the first Indian Prime Minister to visit this country. Both the countries have agreed and will collaborate to develop a bilateral air corridor using India's credit line.

2- Japan: India and Japan have jointly declared to built the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC).

3- Vietnam: India is maintaining good relations with Vietnam and has so far sold Brahmos Missile and 4 patrol boats to the country.

4- Central Asia: Prime Minister Modi visited all the 5 countries of Central Asia in one go and becomes the first Indian Prime Minister to do this. Within 4 years, trade with Central Asian countries has doubled after his visit.

It can be concluded that India has maintained healthy relations with all the nations in China's periphery. This will give strategic access to India and the pattern can be seen as the necklace of diamonds garlanding China in a counter encirclement.

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