



**Pondicherry University**  
**School of Social Sciences & International Studies**  
**UGC Centre for Maritime Studies**

**Call for Papers**  
**Background Note for International Conference**  
**Indo-Pacific: Emerging Dynamics**  
**21-22 February 2019**

Current maritime narratives about the Asia-Pacific geo-politics are focused on converging Indian Ocean with the Pacific Ocean. Major powers as also their allies are trying to synergize these two adjoining oceans into a single strategic construct. Indo-Pacific is the chosen acronym being popularized by US, India and their regional allies like Australia and Japan. This new maritime conundrum of twenty first century is meant to counter the rising power and presence of China across the two oceans. Chinese occupation of islands belonging to other littorals in South China Sea and its open defiance of international law of the sea principles like freedom of navigation in high seas added greater steam to the US-led campaign against China of which India is a willing partner. There is no mistaking therefore that great power rivalries in Indian Ocean, called the 'great game' is assuming sharper notes, with India and US together representing an apparent front to check the Chinese assertive rise in the Indo-Pacific region. China's ambitious Belt Road Initiative (BRI) project and its oceanic component, Maritime Silk Route are also raising several issues of geo-political concern to the littoral powers of the two oceans.

Convergence/ confluence of Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean is called as Indo-Pacific as a single maritime entity. It contains more than one-third of world population and four largest economies: US, China, Japan and India. Besides, ten countries of ASEAN is seen as fastest growing economies in Asia/world and the region is considered to be centre of the Indo-Pacific. Indo-Pacific is a construct that to be seen as it belongs to every nation in the world.

'Indo-Pacific' was first coined in 2007 during the course of India-Japan dialogue. Ever since the term gained quick currency in the evolving India-Japan-US

trilateral dialogue, conveying often the impression that an alliance of the three democracies is imperative to balance the China rise. It is assumed that the three maritime democracies should reshape the economic and security architecture of the Indo-Pacific as ‘an inter-linked and integrated geo-political and geo-economic space *from India to the Pacific to America*. Indo-Pacific terminology gathered greater acceptance among the Indian strategic community as the Look East Policy (LEP) was heading toward its third decade.

Americans strategic pundits who now eagerly join the Indo-Pacific bandwagon contradict their past positions on the Indian Ocean, for the US hardly ever treated Indian Ocean as a single entity but one comprising different, even overlapping sub-regions. While India treated Indian Ocean as one ‘discreet region,’ American policy makers “divide Asia into different theatres and regions” which include Middle East, Southeast Asia, Central Asia, Near EastSouth Asia, Asia-Pacific, and they “apply multiple and overlapping analytical policy filters that include India in different contexts.” For some Americans Indian Ocean is a region “lying on the periphery of other important regions that demand American attention.” The conceptual rigour and consistency of Indo-Pacific needs to be assessed in this bizarre American view of the Indian Ocean.

Against the backdrop of the above burgeoning developments embracing Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean, the UGC Centre for Maritime Studies, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry, organizes a two-day seminar on “**Indo-Pacific: Emerging Dynamics**” during 21-22 February 2019. Experts, policymakers, scholars and bureaucrats would be invited to facilitate a debate on the following themes:

1. Dynamics of Geo-Political Transformation in the Asia-Pacific
2. Concept of Indo-Pacific and its Strategic Contours
3. Littoral Responses to Indo-Pacific
4. QUAD: Conceptual and Temporal Challenges
5. India and Indo-Pacific: Roles and Strategies
6. Convergence of Interests: Developing Blue Economy

**Output:** The seminar proceedings will be published in the form of a volume. It will facilitate different stakeholders including policy planners/makers, bureaucrats, naval personnel, statesmen and researchers to know about various issues related to Indo-Pacific as a single maritime entity.

The Centre invites papers (5000-6000 words) for the above mentioned Conference. The Conference Committee will scrutinize the abstracts/papers and

accordingly invitation will be sent to those papers selected. The Centre will bear the expenses of accommodation and local hospitality.

**Last date for submission of one page abstract (about 350 words) and title of the paper: 20October 2018.**

**Last date for submission of full Paper: 30 December 2018.**

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