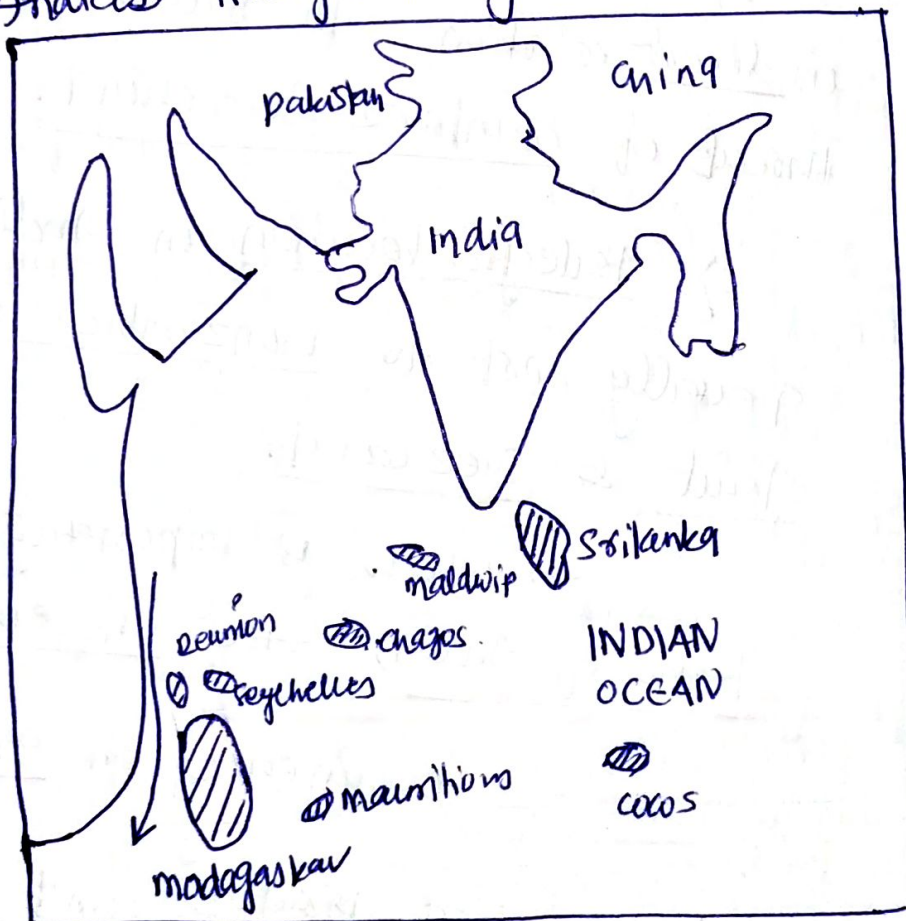


India is surrounded by Island States from three sides, thus, these states have an important - cultural, economic and security related interest for India.

Recent visit of Non-External Affairs minister to Seychelles shows their importance in India's foreign policy.



As shown in the map, island-
India and Indian-ocean, they have following
foreign policy objective

way forward while addressing challenges

(i) Balancing Act - Big Brother image of India pushes these sensitive states to balance India with China, as seen in case of Nambratoda port and debt trap mechanism of one-road one belt initiative of China.

→ people 2 people & cultural linkage to develop confidence among people through easy visa norms, tourism circuits can be beneficial.

→ SAGAR initiative of India should be promoted

(ii) climate change - India is big emitter of GHG which is direct threat to islands via sea level rise, for example SIDS deal.

→ A campaign through cultural centre is needed to show India as responsible towards climate change.

(iv) cultural linkages - many indentured Indians live in island like Fiji, Caribbean islands and still maintain Indian way of life.

- similarly ~~out~~ Indian ocean island like maldives and ASEAN have historical ties with India.

→ This highlights the significance of SOFT POWER of India.

(v) Economical - though not a big market, India can substantiate its mineral requirement & energy requirement.

→ shipping security, trade routes etc lies along them.

And thus, India has developed mechanisms to pursue its foreign policy with

them such as

Indian Ocean Rim Association

with India's leadership to achieve convergence of interest.

Observer in

Indian Ocean Commission

FTA with Maldives

helping through operation verity, operation sanjivani

2004 Tsunami etc.

i) India's interest in multilateral forum

There are hundreds of island countries whose support is required in any multilateral voting.

(ii) security and peace

a) Throughout NAM policy of India, island states played important role in its success.

b) There independence and sovereignty is in direct relation with India's security against threat of countries like China.

c) strategic location in Indian ocean specially w.r. to mozambique strait, malacca strait & suez canal.

→ which is important for 90% trade of India, ~~also~~ oil security.

→ dominance in Indian ocean.

d) To check pirates and terrorism.

(iii) convergence with friendly countries like France, USA, UK who control most of the islands around the world.