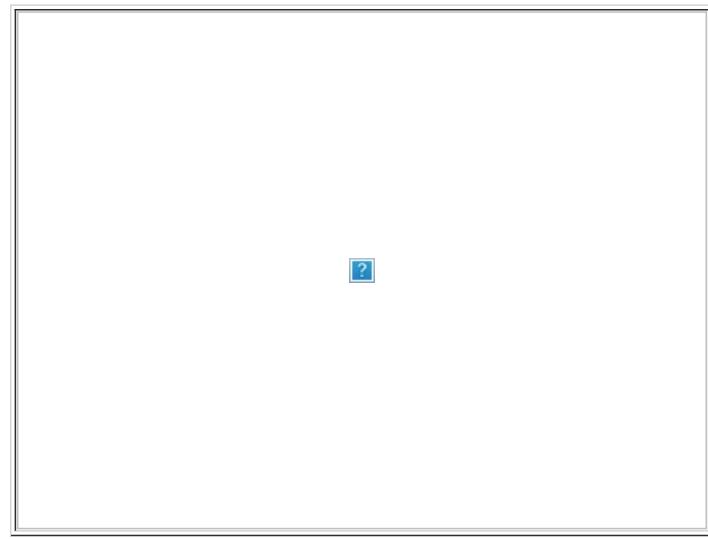


Introduction

Indian Ocean is the third largest of the world's oceanic divisions. The world's earliest civilisations in Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, the Indian subcontinent, Persia and later in Southeast Asia, all developed around the Indian Ocean. Today its littorals and hinterland comprises more than fifty nation states and two-thirds of the world's known reserves of strategic raw materials while an estimated 40 per cent of the world's offshore oil production comes from it.¹ The Oceans have been historically the arenas for contest between maritime powers.

Maritime Perspective and Limitations of Pakistan

Pakistan is a bona fide maritime nation, with wide ranging maritime interests and objectives. Pakistan has a coastline of 990 kms and its Exclusive Economic Zone extends to 24,000 sq km.² Further, Pakistan occupies a strategic position athwart the trade routes in Indian Ocean. Pakistan also provides a direct land route from central Asia to warm waters of Arabian Sea. Hence, its geographical position has a maritime orientation. This is ideal to facilitate communications and promote trade and cooperation in the region. Despite having direct access to the sea, Pakistan has not been able to bring into play the sea and its sumptuous resources to her maximum due to lack of maritime awareness. The main contributing factors to this are the lack of education programmes on maritime affairs and lack of interest in the maritime sector, non-availability of technological resources, agriculture and mining based land lock thinking. Further, high degree of illiteracy in the coastal regions of Pakistan and lack of infrastructure for harbouring maritime activities also could be cited as reasons for poor maritime thinking. These reasons are further aggravated by the lack of understanding, attention and financial resources channelled towards the maritime sector by the various Governments of Pakistan.³



Importance of Pak Navy

Maritime thinkers in Pakistan opine that future competition with its arch rival India would be economic. Mankind's attachment with sea, for a variety of reasons, can be mainly identified through four distinct attributes of the sea : resources, transportation, information and dominion. All these attributes are intimately connected with each other and exhibit the co-operative and conflictual tendencies of international relations. Pakistan in future would have to demand fair distribution of sea wealth, they argue. The unhindered use of the Arabian Sea is vital for the economic well-being and security of Pakistan. More than 95 per cent of country's international trade is routed through the sea.⁴ Hence, in the absence of competitive maritime foundation and more importantly a power base, Pakistan may fall short in asserting what it may think as its rights in future. Pakistan's strategy to avert this is by developing maritime infrastructure focusing on all elements of maritime power, improve its Navy by planning replacement of aging platforms and new inductions. However, the effectiveness of naval forces to establish and maintain control over its waters in the modern times requires the capability to simultaneously operate on surface, under it, in the air, from the shore and also in space. Since Pakistan does not possess the resources to contemplate the inclusion of the full range of maritime missions and functions, Pakistan Navy had to opt for viable options and make crucial choices. It is here that the Pakistan Navy leadership has taken the right step and persuaded the national leadership on acquiring used US naval ships of the Oliver Hazard Perry (OHP) class. This is also in keeping with Pakistan Navy's vision to develop new capabilities and revolutionise their employment strategy to make up for shortfall in numbers.

OHP Class Frigates

Background. The US had constructed 55 OHP class frigates between financial year 1973 to 1987. Of these, three ships have been scrapped and one ship (FFG 53) retained for spares leaving 51 ships.⁵ 26 ships were in USN commission as of end 2011.⁶ Of the balance 25 ships, 21 have been transferred to friendly foreign countries under Foreign Military Sales (FMS) programme and four ships (FFGs 12, 14, 33 and 39) retained for future transfers.

Details of countries to which the 21 OHP class frigates have been transferred are as follows⁷ :-

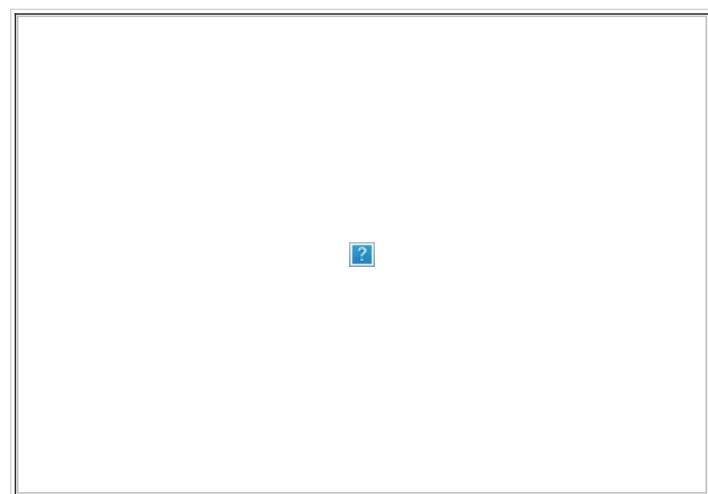
Ser	Country	Qty	Remarks
(a)	Australia	4	In addition, Australia constructed two OHP class Frigates. However, 2 have sunk, leaving 4 in inventory
(b)	Turkey	9	Eight + one for spares
(c)	Egypt	4	
(d)	Bahrain	1	
(e)	Poland	2	
(f)	Pakistan	1	
	Total	21	

In addition, Australia, Spain and Taiwan have indigenously built OHP frigates under Transfer of Technology (ToT) from the US as tabulated below:-

Ser	Country	Qty
(a)	Australia	2
(b)	Spain	6
(c)	Taiwan	8

The US Navy had 26 OHP Class Frigates in its inventory in 2012.8 USS Boone, the oldest OHP class ship in service, was commissioned in May 1982 and USS Ingraham, the last ship of this class in service was commissioned in Aug 1989. The weapon package on board these ships included 1 × OTO Melara Gun Mount and 2 × Triple torpedo Launcher Tubes. These ships are capable of carrying 2 × SH-60B helicopters.9

Sale of USS McInerney to Pakistan. Pakistan had requested US for transfer of OHP Class ships in 2006/07 to facilitate active participation in Coalition Maritime Campaign Plan (CMCP) as part of Global War on Terror (GWOT). The US president had approved 'hot transfer' of USS McInerney, the second ship in the OHP Class (1979 vintage), to Pakistan on 27 Sep 2008. The transfer was under the Excess Defence Article (EDA) arrangement and free of cost. The ship was commissioned as PNS Alamgir on 31 Aug 2010 and was inducted into Pak Navy on 21 May 2011 post arrival in Pakistan.10



Subsequent Developments. In early 2010, Pakistan had requested US for 'Cold Transfer' of two more OHP frigates - USS George Philip (FFG-12) and USS Sides (FFG-14) from the four available. Later, the then Pak CNS, Admiral Noman Bashir, raised the issue of request for a total of eight such ships during discussions with the then US Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Gary Roughead on 18 Mar 2010 and the then US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Michael Mullen, on 22 Mar 2010. However, no progress was made due to deterioration in bilateral relationship.

Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2012. The US Naval Vessel Transfer Act 2012 was passed by the House of Representatives on 31 Dec 2012.11 The Act authorises the US President to transfer ten OHP Frigates to foreign countries under section 516 of Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as grant or sale. These ten frigates were subsequently transferred to various countries during 2013-14 but none to Pakistan.12 This possibly indicated the increased strain in the US - Pak relations. The move was also a signal to assuage concerns raised by India over arms transfers to Pakistan, while cementing the increased USN - Indian Navy cooperation. Pakistan Navy was hopeful of hot transfer of at least two OHP frigates in 2013. To reinforce the utility of OHP class frigate, PN had exploited PNS Almagir (ex-USS McInerney), extensively in 2012 by deploying the ship regularly for CMCP and anti-piracy operations. Further, to highlight the shortage of platforms for coalition tasking, Pakistan Navy had deployed only one ship for a combined CMCP and anti-piracy deployment in end Dec 2012.

Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2013.13 The new draft US Naval Vessel Transfer Act of 2013 was approved by the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 14 Nov 2013. The Act is presently pending for Approval by the US Congress. As per the Act, 11 OHP Frigates will be transferred to countries as below14 :-

Country	Qty	Remarks
Pakistan	3	Gratis
Mexico	2	Gratis
Thailand	2	Gratis
Taiwan	4	Sale

Rights and Privileges of Pakistan Navy Being Foreign Military Supply (FMS) Customer. PN as FMS customer has following rights/ privileges15 :-

- (a) An FMS Programme allows a customer to purchase defence articles, services, and training, as well as design and construction services from The US Government on 'no profit' and 'no loss' basis.
- (b) FMS customer upon acquisition of major equipment such as an OHP frigate will have access from Department of Defence (DoD) stock if available based on priority basis and in case of non availability same are purchased through Direct Commercial Sale (DCS) on much cheaper rates. The US Government purchases the items based on cumulative requirement for their Armed Forces and 120 FMS customers on open bidding and prices quoted are very low. This procurement can be done through FMS cases i.e. Defined Order cases for Significant Military Equipment which is called FMSO-I, Blanket Order cases for spares (follow on support) called FMSO-II case and Cooperative Logistics Supply Support Arrangements (CLSSA). A CLSSA is an arrangement designed to provide responsive follow on support for the US produced military hardware possessed by a foreign country.
- (c) FMS customer can acquire major equipment and spares from Excess Defence Articles (EDA) free of cost from the US after Congressional approval.
- (d) FMS Customers are allowed to participate in the contract negotiation process between the US and vendors.
- (e) Pakistan Navy can ask for amendments or modifications such as addition/ deletion of equipment during the course of materialisation of an Letter of Offer and Acceptance (LOA) by submitting a Letter of Request for LOA.
- (f) FMS customer can request for sole source vendor by justifying the sole source requirement and foregoing the competitive process due to outstanding relationship and services of the vendor with the customer.
- (g) FMS customer can request for waiver of non-recurring cost (NRC) due financial hardship of the country and same is granted by Director DSCA based on justification provided by the customer.
- (h) Total Package Approach (TPA), Insurance, Warranty and submission of Supply Discrepancy Report (SDR) within SDR's timeframe (one year from date of shipment or billed) is provided by the US to FMS customer.

US Security Assistance to Pak (5-year Plan). US Secretary of Navy, Raymond Edwin Mabus visited Pakistan on 18 Nov 2013. US Secretary was on a two-day visit to Pakistan and also met the Pak CNS and visited the Joint Staff HQs in Chaklala. During the meeting of the US - Pak Defence Consultative Group (DCG) held from 23-26 Nov 2013 in Washington, the US is likely to provide security assistance to Pakistan to help it build counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism capabilities under a joint five-year plan developed by the two countries. The US - Pak DCG meeting has given a final shape to the five-year security assistance plan.¹⁶ The plan focuses on supplying military hardware that the US would be providing to Pakistan under the Foreign Military Financing (FMF). It is part of this decision that the Obama Administration informed the Congress of a number of appropriations related to security assistance to Pakistan, which totalled about USD 1.4 billion in military assistance of which USD 425 million was meant for Pakistan counter-insurgency and capabilities fund (PCCF) and the rest about USD 1 billion was in FMF.¹⁷ In addition, the notifications included roughly USD 260 million of civilian assistance, of which USD 230 million was focused on energy programmes for Pakistan and USD 30 million was the State Department funding for civilian police programmes. In September, the US also released to Pakistan USD 322 million as a reimbursement for Coalition Support Fund. Officials from Pakistan and the US have identified seven broad capabilities of security assistance cooperation, as follows¹⁸ :-

- (a) Night Vision.
- (b) Precision Strike.
- (c) Counter Improvised Explosive Devices.
- (d) Survivability.
- (e) Border Security.
- (f) Communications.
- (g) Maritime Operations/Maritime Abilities.

Transfer to Pakistan. As per the 5 Year Security Assistance Plan, the US is to support enhancement of Pakistan's Maritime ability. Towards this end, the US has agreed to transfer three OHP class frigates to Pakistan, on gratis basis under section 516 of the Foreign Assistance Act, one each in fiscal years 2014, 2015 and 2016.¹⁹ The particulars of the vessels are as follows:-

Ser	Vessel Name	Pennant No	Date of Commission
(a)	USS Klakring	FFG 42	20 Aug 83

(b)	USS De Wert	FFG 45	19 Nov 83
(c)	USS Robert G Bradley	FFG 49	30 Jun 84



USS Klakring USS De Wert USS Robert G Bradley

Thorns in US-Pak Defence Cooperation

The ongoing regional transition and internal political changes have resulted in the US - Pak relations not being normalised to the desired level. Despite the declaration of the US Administration that Pakistan is vital partner against Al Qaida, no significant movement is forthcoming either diplomatically or militarily till recently. The issue of drones and covert support to Taliban in Afghanistan are prominent concerns and divergent issues. The other related issues are the trade relations and resumption of negotiations on bilateral investment treaty; both the nations want improvements in economic relations but are not finding common grounds to make any head way. Similarly, the subject of civilian nuclear deal with Pakistan is not being discussed at the moment because of lack of incentives on both sides. The most discouraging indication between the two countries is the public image, with only 11 per cent of Pakistanis viewing the US positively and a similar figure in the US too (where Pakistan is viewed as supporting Taliban and Al Qaida).

Conclusion

The recent diplomatic bonhomie exhibited between the US and Pakistan is slowly manifesting into robust military relationship as expected by Pakistan. This is evident from the US not reserving for Pakistan any of the OHP frigates earmarked for transfer to friendly countries in 2013; but has placed three ships in transfer list for 2014.

Pakistan being a major regional power, Pakistan Navy considers its ambition to control events in North Arabian Sea as legitimate. Towards this, it has an ambitious ship acquisition/building plan. Shattered national economy, does not support Pak Navy's growth plan as desired. In the interim, the deficiencies are made good by acquiring used platforms to fulfil current day needs. The OHP class frigates are an ideal platform for displaying Pakistan's Flag in global initiatives like the Anti-Piracy Deployment and CMCP. Further, the benefits that accrue to Pakistan as a FMS customer are formidable. In the present scenario, the likely recourse for Pakistan would be to increase cooperation with the US. Towards this end, Pakistan is likely to strongly submit its case with the US Government for an additional transfer of four more OHP frigates post 2016. Once fructified, Pakistan Navy will have eight used US OHP class ships, which could be considered adequate to meet its operational commitments; and thus will be able to bridge its capability deficiency in the immediate future.

Endnotes

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