

# Review of: "Project Mausam: India's Cultural Strategy for the Indian Ocean"

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**Potential competing interests:** No potential competing interests to declare.

Project Mausam is a strategic plan, which is a very important but understudied strategic topic. I was expecting a revealing article here, but it was not what I was expecting. Nearly a quarter of the article is historical referencing, which shows that the author is trying hard to convince the reader of the historical nature of this, which in the case of a nation-state is not true.

Historical references, like the medieval period reference of the 13th and 15th centuries, are not needed. An entire paragraph on Indian historical intrigues containing Columbus, Babylon, the Old Testaments, Chola dominance, etc., is not needed.

Medieval Period Reference (13th to 15th Century):

"Further, during the medieval period of the 13th to 15th centuries, Chinese naval vessels routinely voyaged across the Indian Ocean for commerce as well as for political and diplomatic engagements."

Indian Historical Intrigues (Columbus, Babylon, Old Testaments, Cholas Dominance):

"The inextricable connection between the ancient civilisations of Nineveh and Babylon and the Western coast of India can be identified by incontrovertible historical and archaeological evidence... The supremacy over the Seas was demonstrated by the Cholas, which terminated only with the collapse of the Chola power in the thirteenth century."

References to Columbus and Chola Supremacy:

"Before Columbus crossed the Atlantic and Magellan sailed the massive Pacific, the Indian Ocean had emerged as a bustling channel facilitating a vibrant conduit for trade and cultural exchanges among myriad civilisations."

And another quarter or more has been dedicated to counter China, sounding as if China is the causation of Project Mausam, which I think is not true to a large extent. Foreign strategic cultural policies are beyond a response to a nation state's foreign policy. I would have loved to see more information on the involvement of other departments like ASI, the Ministry of Culture, the Minister of Indian Soft Power, other than the Ministry of External Affairs. In all, it is a good article to read.