

## **IDSA Research Agenda**

Research work continues to constitute the mainstay of Institute's activities. In identifying specific research topics to be assigned to individual scholars, particular attention is being paid to the relevance of those issues in terms of India's security and strategic concerns. Scholars are particularly advised to keep a close track of research work already undertaken in their respective fields in the IDSA and elsewhere with a view to avoiding duplication and for identification of gap areas of concern to us. The details of research priorities have been classified under two broad categories of **Areas Studies** and **Thematic Studies**. These are given below:

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### **A. AREA STUDIES**

| <b>NO.</b> | <b>SECTIONS</b>                | <b>COUNTRY/ISSUE</b>   | <b>PAGE</b> |
|------------|--------------------------------|--|-------------|
| <b>I</b>   | <b>SOUTH ASIA</b>              | <b>Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Afghanistan, Regional and General Issues.</b> | <b>2-3</b>  |
| <b>II</b>  | <b>EAST ASIA</b>               | <b>China, Japan, Korean Peninsula, Southeast Asia, Myanmar</b>   | <b>4-5</b>  |
| <b>III</b> | <b>CENTRAL ASIA AND RUSSIA</b> | <b>Central Asia, Russia</b>  | <b>5</b>    |
| <b>IV</b>  | <b>WEST ASIA</b>               | <b>Iran, Iraq, Arab-Israeli issues, Gulf countries</b>   | <b>5-6</b>  |
| <b>V</b>   | <b>AFRICA</b>                  |  | <b>6</b>    |
| <b>VI</b>  | <b>AMERICAS</b>                | <b>USA, Latin America</b>  | <b>6</b>    |

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### **B. THEMATIC ISSUES**

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|------------|-------------------------------|--|----------|
| <b>I</b>   | <b>MILITARY AFFAIRS</b>       | <b>Defence Issues, Maritime Security, Modeling, Simulation, Net Assessment and Risk Assessment</b> | <b>7</b> |
| <b>II</b>  | <b>WMD AND NUCLEAR ISSUES</b> |  | <b>7</b> |
| <b>III</b> | <b>NON-MILITARY THREATS</b>   | <b>International Terrorism, Internal Security Issues, Environmental Security, Energy</b>           | <b>8</b> |

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## **A. AREA STUDIES**

### **I. SOUTH ASIA**

- ***Bangladesh***

Rise of Islamic extremism; Jehadi and fundamentalist support structures within Bangladesh; External linkages of Jehadi and fundamentalist forces; Challenges to democracy and role of the Army; Economic situation and impediments to growth; Status of minorities; Presence of Indian insurgent groups; Security implications of illegal migration for India; Linkages between India's Northeast and Bangladesh; Bangladesh's oil and gas industry; State of political and economic ties with India; Relations with Pakistan; Defence and energy cooperation with China; China's economic, military, and economic influence in Bangladesh; Impact of global warming on Bangladesh and implications for the region.

- ***Pakistan***

The role of Pakistani army in governance and the extent of Islamisation of the Pakistani army; Impact of religious extremism within Pakistan; Sectarian (Shia-Sunni) conflict; Ethno-nationalism - instability in Balochistan; Security situation in the Federally Administered Tribal Area (FATA), particularly Waziristan; Political scenario in post-election Pakistan; Situation in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK) and Northern Areas; Terrorism and the Role of Jihadi Groups; Relations with India and status of peace process; Stakeholders influencing Pakistan's India policy; Relations with US and China.

- ***Sri Lanka***

Review of peace process and impact of international mediation; Role India can play in resolution of the conflict: Expectations and Constraints; Political future of the LTTE and the split in LTTE; Role of non-LTTE Tamil and Muslim groups in possible conflict resolution processes; LTTE's military capabilities; LTTE's arms procurement and business financing networks; Humanitarian dimension and continuing flow of Tamil migrants to India; Tamil Nadu factor in determining India's policy towards Sri Lanka; Security and economic imperatives of Sethu Samudram project; Prospects of energy exploration in the Gulf of Mannar.

- ***Nepal***

Evolving situation in Nepal and its strategic implications; Full restoration of democratic process and elections to Constituent Assembly; Maoists and their integration into the political mainstream; Challenge of building an inclusive democracy; Madhesi problem and implications for India; Indian role in the development and reconstruction in Nepal; Role of China in Nepal; Role of the USA, EU and other powers; Bhutanese refugee problem.

- ***Bhutan***

Evolution of democratic processes in Bhutan; Indo-Bhutan relations; Harnessing of Bhutan's water resources and energy cooperation; Bhutanese refugee problem.

- ***Maldives***

Political developments and genesis of dissent; Growing relations with China and Pakistan.

- ***Afghanistan***

Resurgence of Taliban and its implications for the region; Northern Alliance and Stability of Afghanistan; Relations between Afghanistan and US; Assessment of GWOT; NATO's expanding role; Trends in Afghan-Pakistan Relations; Role of Iran in Afghanistan; Review of the security situation and implications for India; Current Trends and Future Prospects of Indo-Afghan Relations.

- ***Regional and General Issues***

Progress in SAFTA; Bilateral and sub-regional free trade arrangements, including BIMSTEC; Common infrastructure development; Role of China and other outside powers, including USA in India's neighbourhood; Appraisal of India's influence in its strategic neighbourhood and strategy for shaping our periphery; India's role in Indian Ocean: Prospects and Problems; Public diplomacy themes for projecting India's 'soft power' vis-à-vis US, EU, China and Pakistan; South Asian diasporas and their role and influence;

## II. EAST ASIA

- ***China***

Domestic socio-political challenges; Changing role of the Communist Party – leadership struggles and inner-party dynamics of CPC; Rise of China and emerging geo-political landscape in Asia; Military modernization and acquisition of new systems; Defence expenditure of China: the hidden component; Chinese advances in network-centric warfare and information warfare; China's maritime power; China's search for energy; Foreign policy postures - China's strategic engagements with Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Gulf/Central Asia, Developments in India-China relations; US-China relations; Cross-Straits relations; Infrastructure developments in Tibet and implications for India; Tibet after the Dalai Lama; Increasing Hanisation in Tibet and its implications; Implications of the Kunming Initiative on India; Comparative analysis of Chinese methodologies in dealing with boundary issues with neighbours;

- ***Japan***

Japan's emerging strategic engagement with Asia; Changing security policy and the growth in military expenditure; Evolving dynamics of Japan-US relations; China-Japan tensions; Evolving India-Japan partnership.

- ***Korean Peninsula***

North Korean nuclear issue - impact on the security and militarization in the region.

- ***Southeast Asia***

Phenomenon of religious extremism and terrorism; Regionalism - ASEAN/East Asia Summit; India-Southeast Asia relations, including defence cooperation; Connectivity between India and Southeast Asia – Problems and Prospects; Role of India in the security of Southeast Asia; Economic and political trends in Vietnam, Cambodia;

- **Myanmar**

India-Myanmar relations and issues, including – energy, transportation, maritime security, sub-regional cooperation, countering insurgency, terrorism, narco-smuggling, India's Northeast and Myanmar; Myanmar and its relationship with China and Bangladesh: Implications for India; Developments in Myanmar and implications for India;

### **III. CENTRAL ASIA AND RUSSIA**

- **Central Asia**

Phenomenon of religious extremism and terrorism; Great Power rivalry in Central Asia; Transportation routes and energy grids/pipelines through Central Asia; Possible areas of economic and defence cooperation between India and Central Asian states; Implications of the growth of SCO for India; Economic and political trends in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan;

- **Russia**

Politico-security dimensions of Russia's resurgence, Implications for global security; Russian economy; Indo-Russian strategic relations; Future direction of Indo-Russian defence cooperation; Russian role in Central Asia; Growing Russian role in World Energy Security; Russia after Putin; Prospects of India-Russia-China triangle;

### **IV. WEST ASIA**

- **Iran**

Iran's role in the region and its relations with the GCC states; Iran's nuclear programme and the current standoff – strategic implications; Iran and India: future challenges and scope for energy cooperation.

- **Iraq**

Sectarian conflict in Iraq and its fallout in the neighbouring countries; Resistance to continued US presence and incidence of violence; Prospects for

peace, stability and democratization; Economic reconstruction with focus on Iraq's capacity to restore its energy export potential; Prospective role for India.

- **Arab-Israeli Issues**

Incidence of religious extremism; The rise of non-state armed groups - continuing violence; Arab–Israeli dispute including the Palestinian issue.

- **Gulf Countries**

Strategic implications of improving Indo-Saudi Arabia ties; India-GCC security and economic; Implications of the democratisation of West Asian regimes.

## **V. AFRICA**

India's quest for energy resources in Africa - prospects and problems; Rise of fundamentalism in Africa; Comparative study of Indian and Chinese presence in Africa; India's Peacekeeping Role in Africa; Country focus on South Africa, Nigeria, Niger; Resource mapping;

## **VI. AMERICAS**

- **USA**

India-US relations: Evolving strategic partnership; Indo-US Civil nuclear cooperation; US-led Global War on Terror and its implications for India; Indo-US Defence Cooperation; Indian Diaspora in the United States; US elections and possible scenarios; Stakeholders for India within the US system;

- **Latin America**

The utility of Latin American countries to India, in terms of investment as markets and as a source for supply of energy, raw materials, and technology; Critical analysis of the IBSA Forum; Brazil's defence industrial base – lessons for India.

## **B. THEMATIC ISSUES**

### **I. MILITARY AFFAIRS**

- ***Defence Issues***

Global military trends and changing nature of warfare; Monitoring of defence expenditure by key countries; Defence expenditure of Pakistan and China – the hidden component; Critical evaluation of Indian defence expenditure in the context of our key priorities and perceptions; Revolution in Military affairs – road ahead for India; Defence management reform – Organisational and Institutional reforms; Strategies to deal with low intensity conflicts; Asymmetric warfare and strategies to deal with it; National security strategy; Information warfare strategy; Strategy for development of comprehensive national power – 2025; India's policy for outer space; Trends of Information security worldwide – Implications for India; Use of cyberspace by terrorists to target India; Problems and prospects of India's membership of NTCR and NSG;

- ***Maritime Security***

Overview of India's maritime security concerns; India's role in securing Malacca Straits; India's defence cooperation with littoral states to augment their capacities in the maritime security field.

- ***Modeling, Simulation, Net Assessment and Risk Assessment***

Scenario-building and crises-gaming exercises on issues of concern; Effect of IT and emerging technologies on future conflicts; Country-specific political and security risk assessment, particularly in respect of Indian investments and other assets overseas.

### **II. WMD AND NUCLEAR ISSUES**

Multilateral nuclear fuel-cycle regime; Efforts to strengthen the non-proliferation regime; FMCT negotiation; Civil Nuclear energy cooperation; WMD and international terrorism; Trends in Ballistic Missile Defence; Counter-proliferation; Critical analysis of India's nuclear doctrine, relevance, efficacy, and scope for change.

### **III. NON - MILITARY THREATS**

- ***International Terrorism***

Phenomenon of cross-border terrorism; Rise of fundamentalism; Profile of major international terrorist organizations and networking amongst them; Nexus between terrorism and other trans-national crimes, including drug-trafficking and arms-peddling.

- ***Internal Security Issues***

Growth of left-wing extremism in India – socio-economic factors and governance issues; Government's response; Evolving institutions and mechanisms in India to counter terrorism; Activities of insurgent groups in the Northeast; Emerging jihadi activities in the Northeast; Increasing extortion activities and Measures to tackle the menace; Impact of regional instabilities on India's internal security.

- ***Environmental Security***

Impact of environment issues such as the decline of fresh water resources in the Himalayan systems; Water Security issues; Climate change and implications for India; Demographic changes within India and its long-term implications.

- ***Energy Security***

World oil crisis – implications for global security and future prospects; Energy pipelines; Risk Assessment in energy transportation; Scenario of terrorist strikes on energy infrastructure; India's overall energy security scenario; India's energy security strategy – 2025; Shapes and contours of Energy Security structures in South Asia.

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