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**Asian Strategic Review-2014: US Pivot & Asian Security**

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The United States has been so far, during this century, the only super power in the global community of nations. It is, therefore, of great significance to other nations to correctly perceive the US policy & Strategy and its *Raison d'être*, and how does it serve the US interest, and the impact of such US strategy on the countries in the region, and finally how does it affect India's national interest in the field of economy, diplomacy, culture identity and most importantly on our defence & Security.

The book, "Asia Strategic Review-2014" edited by Professor SD Muni & Colonel Vivek Chadha is a very comprehensive work by a large number of experts who have with great diligence taken the task of conducting research in this vital area with critical insight and scholarly analysis of factors guiding the US in shaping its strategy to secure its economic and security interests.

It is the view of the authors that the US had to redesign its strategy in the Asia-Pacific region because of the rising military & economy power of Peoples Republic of China. It was also appreciated that the US had considerable economic & commercial interest in the developing countries of Asia & Pacific region. President Barack Obama first named it "Asia-Pacific Pivot strategy" This indicated that the US now considered the Asia-Pacific region of much greater importance than before. And therefore, it had decided to relocate its military assets from the Middle East, Iraq and Afghanistan to this region.

The same policy that was earlier referred to as "Asia-Pacific Pivot Strategy" is now termed as the "Strategy of Resurgence" with similar aims & objectives as the earlier composition. According to Arvind Gupta, Director General of the IDSA, who has quoted the then US Secretary of Defence Leon E. Panetta, "America is at a turning point. After a decade of wars, we are developing a new defence strategy-a central feature of which is a 'rebalancing' towards the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, we will expand our military partnership & our presence in the area extending from the Western Pacific and East Asia into the Indian Ocean region & South Asia" In his paper which deals with the military implication of the new US defence strategy, Colonel Vivek Chadha, a Research Fellow at the IDSA, observes that the US 'rebalancing' is not so much about increasing its military assets in the region as it is with the aim to design the security structure that will provide it the strength to lead the partnerships and alliances to its advantage.

The maritime aspect of the US strategy is dominated by the new concept of "air-Sea Battle" (ASB) in which the air and naval assets will be repositioned. Abhijit Singh, a Research Fellow at the IDSA, is of the view that the naval and air capabilities will protect US interests and the interests of its allies in the region against aggressive Chinese moves. Another paper dealing with the military dimension of the "Resurgence Strategy", written by Colonel P.K. Gautam, a Senior Research Fellow at the IDSA, strongly recommends the setting up of a National Defence University (NDU) to study in depth the implication of defence strategies of regional & global nations on the defence & security of India. In this connection, it is well to remember that Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh has already laid the foundation of the National Defence University at Gurgaon; it only needs a follow up at a high level to bring the project to early completion.



The following two papers by Rajeev Agarwal and P K Pradhan consider the impact of the new US 'Strategy of Resurgence.' On the Middle East region and by Rukmani Gupta on PRC, and come to the conclusion that keeping in view, the vital interests of the US in the Middle East oil & the security of Israel, the present military development cannot be reduced except marginally, while in the adoption of new strategy by the US, the PRC sees it as curbing the PRC influence & option. The outcome has been adopted by China. The US move has made China act in a more aggressive manner. So, what is the PRC's Military response?

This has been considered in the paper by Mandeep Singh, who concludes that the PRC realises the US is far ahead of PRC in military technology and capability, and by a generous defence budget and the growing strength of the PLA will provide a matching fighting capability. The impact of the new US security strategy on the countries of the Indian Ocean region, as seen by Sarabjeet Singh Parmar, is complex and covers several issues of strategic importance that need a deeper understanding, particularly in view of the growing Chinese influence in the littoral countries.

The response to the US "balancing strategy" by the member nations of ASEAN has been less than positive and most of them would like to follow a "hedging" strategy and may not like to antagonise China at the cost of the US or vice versa. China's growing power and assertiveness have provided an important stimulus for reviewed US presence. This is the view of the paper presented by Rahul Mishra, a Research Fellow at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA).

The new US Strategy has a reliable partner in Japan to assist the US implement it in the region and Japan is taking steps to build its military strength, particularly its Air-self Defence & Maritime Self-defence Forces, and Shamshad A. Khan, Research Fellow at the ICWA, quoting analysts says that the aims of the US and Japan coincide and both are ready to counter China's military expansion.

Rajiv Nayan, a Senior Research Associate at the IDSA, a specialist in nuclear issues, while concluding his essay on nuclear proliferation says, "With the adoption of Asian rebalancing policy by the US, nuclearisation of Asia has not seen any positive development. The reason for it is very simple: the US has failed to target the central figure of Asian nuclear proliferation, that is China and North Korea, and both continue to play a very deceptive game.

Arvind Gupta, Director General IDSA, and Rup Narayan Das, a Senior Fellow at the IDSA, look at the new US strategy from the Indian view point. Arvind Gupta's prescription for India, in the strategic situation arising from the growing militarisation of China and the US policy of "Rebalance" primarily fashioned to counter China's rising strength, is for India to pay greater attention to the issues of the Indian Ocean region and play an active part in shaping its policy. Rup Narayan Das, calls for a calibrated reaction to the US policy, for it has to consider the complex relationship with China because of its unresolved border issue with that country.

It is obvious that the authors have carried out the study of their subjects in great depth, and with critical analysis of issues that affect the policies of the regional countries in the context of the evolving US policy of "resurgence" The authors have provided a very extensive number of notes, which should encourage further research into the changing strategic environment in the region as a result of the US policy of "resurgence". The assessment and evaluation of military & economic forces made by the authors are logical & relevant and need serious study by those in charge of foreign and defence policies of India.

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