

# The US Factor in Indo-Pacific Region & Its Security Concerns

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**Abstract:** *The fact is that the economist power shift has increased the geo-strategic significance of the Indo-Pacific regions. Moreover, it has been resulted the process of cooperation and competition among the regional powers in South China Sea and indo-pacific region. The emerging trends and issues in the Indo-Pacific regions offer a unique opportunity as well as a daunting challenge to the regional security in the region. However, these developments have generated a sense of interest and debate among the researchers and policy makers throughout the world. Therefore, the present research paper highlights the US factor in Indo-Pacific region and its imperative for regional powers.*

**Keywords:** Security Concerns, Indo-Pacific Region, South China Sea,

Regional Powers, Indian Ocean, ASEAN.

**Introduction:** The Indo-Pacific region has its own emerging geo-strategic importance in the recent years and this region has been very significant for India and China in the perspective of defence and security relations. However, it is the geographical connotation of the South China Sea which has created the problem of regional security imbalances in the area of Indo-Pacific region. Being a part and parcel of this region India has recently known Geo-Strategic importance of South-China Sea. Moreover, *India's Look East Policy* has enforced the Government of India to act on the policy in the perspective of the changing global scenario in Indo-Pacific region. That is why, Modi Government has recently renewed

India's Look East Policy into '*Act East Policy*' which not only seeks to increase the people-to-people contact and greater connectivity in the region but also seeks to play a larger and active role in the vital region.

### **Geographical Location of Indo-Pacific Region:**

This region forms a composite entity of sea regions and littorals marked by a multiplicity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, economic models and Government structures and a common link binding the diverse sub-systems within the Indo-Pacific is the South China Sea. In this regard the concept of Indo-Pacific region has been highlighted by the approaches of constructivism, balance of power, global power shift, strategic autonomy choices, and concert of democracies, Indo-Pacific regionalism and Indo-Pacific commons. To conclude, the Indo-Pacific region includes some new frameworks that shows a rivalry and security interest in the global powers including the regional powers. Moreover, it is important for the maritime powers such as: Australia, Japan, India, China,

Taiwan and the US, which determine the pivot of Indian Pacific region, to seek to dominate and influence each other's to achieve their national goals of foreign policies.

### **Geostrategic Importance of Indo-Pacific Region:**

In fact this region represents the centre of gravity for the world's global powers including economic, political and strategic interest and it is also rich in natural resources such as hydrocarbons which fuel the industrial engine of the world's global economies. That is why, the global and regional powers have always been competing over the issue of natural resources and in the recent years with the global economic power shift, this region has swiftly and very rapidly emerged as a centre of International Trade and Investments. Indeed, Indo-Pacific region embodies a large market which is defined by half of the world population. Here it is also noteworthy that this region's peace and stability depend on the issue of peaceful maritime relation. All the regional powers and global powers demand for freedom of navigation in

this region. The region consists of many of the world's vital choke points for the global trade which is very crucial for the growth of world economy.

Furthermore, the boom in the port construction in Indo-Pacific region has also highlighted the strategic importance of the commercial traffic and maritime facilities for the regional powers. In the recent past the increasing flow of raw material such as oil and gas into the region has led some controversial consequences for the global powers. However, this region constitute the engine of economic development and it may be rightly pointed out that the geo-strategic importance of the region may be considered as the global strategic growth and the expansion of aspiring powers can be contained and regulated through the control of choke points in the region.

**Security Challenges:** Actually, the Indo-Pacific region has been emerging as a theater of the great powers and regional powers completion and rivalry. That is why; it has created

many security concerns while traditional rivalry forces claim maritime territory and resources of this region. But the rise of non-traditional powers and threats such as piracy drug trafficking and terrorism have also thrown a new challenge for the nation states. Moreover, the centrality of the region lies in the fact that this region is very rich in natural resources, energy and international trade and commerce which renders the region stability and peace. The nature of these security challenges has considerable transnational implications which require more and more international cooperation. In addition this region has emerged as highly volatile with proliferation of nuclear and missile weapons.

Rajiv Nayan in his article, "*U.S. Pivot and Asian Security*" has highlighted the implication of the Obama administration strategy to rebalance this region in the perspective of nuclearisation. He has also pointed out that the rebalance strategy of the US has held some limited impacts to curb the proliferation of such weapons.

Consequently the US has failed to control the role of China and North Korea in their Nuclear Programs. Therefore, this will have serious security implications for the global powers as well as for the regional powers. Recent developments in the region have created some new security concerns and a rising rivalry among the political powers such as China, India, Indonesia, Japan and Australia may create tensions in the coming years in the Indo-Pacific region. Today the key issues in the region are the impressive economic growth rates, maritime security, capability distribution, revisionist powers and new found nationalistic approaches regarding the national goals.

### **The U.S. Factor in Indo-Pacific**

**Region:** A well-known fact is that Indo-Pacific region has been very important for the U.S. in the era of Obama regime. Therefore, it is a comprehensive strategy of the US which aims to protect and promote the U.S. national interest in the region by accelerating its economic and diplomatic engagements with its

traditional and non-traditional allies. It has also its military, strategic and ideological dimension in the perspective of security concern for the US in the global relation. It is essential driven by the geo-strategic imperative of the economically fast growing Indo-Pacific and its implication for the U.S. interests and dominance in the region. The US strategy to rebalance is primarily based on the three fundamental aspects: Rise of China, which has posed serious security challenges to the US interest in the region. Second, the US after exhausting military and economic resources over a decade-long involvement in the greater west Asia crisis seeks to shift its focus to the words fastest growing Indo-Pacific region for reviving its economy as well as creating jobs and new opportunities for the U.S. Third, the US also seeks to correct its imbalance in power projection in the world scenario by repositioning its military forces in this region.

Moreover, the geo-strategic importance of the region has prompted the US to redefine its broader foreign

policy engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. The US strongly believes that its foreign policy interest would be best served by moving from an earlier emphasis on just the Asia - Pacific region to one based on a broader Indo-Pacific region. The US also states that peace, stability and freedom of navigation are very crucial for the prosperity of this region on a whole including that of the US and the China. Therefore, to protect and promote the US interest in the region, the US desires to play a vital role for a long time in future by instituting new regional economic and security architecture in this region but the US military commitment and capability to protect its allies may be a major cause of conflict in this region.

**Conclusion:** Today it is most likely that the Indo-Pacific region need to intensify the process of cooperation on maritime safety and security disaster management, job creation and health, fisheries and maritime resources, science and technology and environment security. It is thought that it is the only way which is very

potential to curb the security concerns in Indo-Pacific region. For this effort, here it is an urgent need that people-to-people interactions should be promoted to strengthen the regional cooperation. However, some emerging trends and issues in Indo-pacific regions are a cause of worry regarding the security and in the coming year's maritime security within the Indo-Pacific region will be a key factor in the development of global relations. It still remains a major concern due to maritime boundary disputes. Moreover, this region shares so many common concerns such as terrorism, human trafficking, piracy and climate change which will affect the process of cooperation in this region. Therefore, all the scholars, academicians and policy makers should understand the gravity of the problem and a healthy debate should be promoted.

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