



Center for Global & Strategic Studies

Russia's Pivot to Asia-Pacific

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The recent terror attacks in Quetta has extended shock waves across Pakistan. More than sixty dead bodies; buried a long sixty dreams, sixty families, and then the same usual strong condemnation from the state with the proposal of setting up an inquiry

committee which will remain inconclusive with a waiting time for another incident to happen. This truly depicts the chaotic state which needs to be addressed on an immediate basis.

After the attack, a recap of muddling response has been observed, particularly from the US. The United States now perceives Pakistan as a victim of domestic turmoil and diplomatic isolation in international relations. They think that government needs an effective implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) to halt the menace of terrorism. The US experts on terror financing have underlined that they are more inclined to help Pakistan in choking the channels of terror finance, but Pakistan needs to take substantial steps for implementing a strict monetary regulation regime.

However, in response to the offensive attack in Quetta, unlike the United States (US), Russia has come forward with the substantial support. The state officials from Russia have expressed their willingness to jointly work with Pakistan against the nuisance of terrorism with a more forward approach. In contrast with the US response, the Russians showed confidence in the leadership to work together against terrorism.

As a matter of fact, the declared Russian support in the aftermath of Quetta attack is worrisome for its long-time ally India and an irk for the US. Surprisingly, it has backed India after the Uri attack but has not offered its cooperative support to fight the terrorism as it offered to Pakistan after the Quetta blast. In the comparative analysis of the world's major powers stance against terrorism, Russia outweighs the US support. Pakistan has been accused of harboring terrorists since the aftermath of

9/11. Putin's declaration of cooperation against terrorism is an eye opener for the international politics and the US hegemony in particular.

Along with the Russian support, the other world powers have also helped Pakistan on the issue of counter-terrorism. The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway has also condemned the deadly terrorist attack in Quetta. He expressed his solidarity with the families of martyred. China has also confirmed its continued support to Pakistan for its internal peace and stability. Even though the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China has declared that it would help Pakistan in the case of any foreign aggression.

Asia Pivot

Counting the explicit support of Russia and China, the President of Tajikistan has also urged that there be a dire need for a framework against the collective stance on terrorism. However, the regional and international political scenario are going to change under the Asia-Pivot of the great powers. The foreign policy of the major powers specifically of Russia and China towards Pakistan in Asian region would undermine the US hegemony in the upcoming years.

Although Russia will take the time to emerge as a global superpower, it tends to exhibit its regional leadership by having proactive policies towards Asia. As a matter of fact, Pakistan seems to be the beneficiary of the Asia Pivot of Russia. Regardless of low trade rate of Russia with the Asian states, it is optimistic about its Asia pivot policy.

An export target of 10 million tons from Russia to Asia by 2020 has been set by the (RCFAD) Russian-Chinese Fund of Agriculture Development. Moreover, Russia has

shown keenness to increase agricultural support towards Asia. For instance, total two hundred and seventy projects have been reserved for the agricultural sector in Asia. The Russian traders are also interested in linking Asia with Russia via logistic routes. The number of free trade agreements (FTA) among various Asian states through the lead route of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has increased this year. Even the cooperation among Russian and Asian countries is growing in the sector of Information Technology (IT).

Implications: Pak-China-Russia Triangle

The Asia Pivot of Russia has greater consequences for the regional states. The regional political scenario has been transformed after Russia's tilt towards Asia. From the global perspective, the pro-Asian policy of Russia has posed a threat to the US hegemony in the region. China and Russia are the only two states which seem to be capable of countering US-led Asia Pivot.

From realist viewpoint, for any country, it is tough and challenging at the same time to achieve the regional hegemony. The marine policy of Russia has emphasized on cooperating with China and the other states around in the region. By working with China and other regional countries, Russian foreign policy has taken a new shift towards regional integration.

By building alliances with China and Asian states, Russia tends to counter US influence in the region. Bearing strategic saying in mind, i.e. "Enemy of an enemy is the friend of mine," Russia has started making alliances with east along its Asia-Pacific pivot.

Russia and China are of the same perception that the US is the cause of destabilization in the region. As a result, there is a massive shift in the international politics. Adversaries are ready to join each other on the same platform. Rivals came together to root out the influence of common enemy. The China-Russia-Asian countries axis depicts this situation in an actual sense.

Counting India-US alliances, on the one hand, the Sea of Japan and the South China Sea are the core issues in Pak-China-Russia axis. To counter US influence, China and Russia has conducted joint military exercises in the Sea of Japan as well as the Mediterranean Sea. In the same manner, Russia supports the Chinese stance on the South China Sea (SCS) where the US is considered as an irritant.

Bottom Annotations

Russia led Asia pivot has given birth to the China-Pak-Russia axis. This axis aims to elucidate the west policies that have also offended many states in the region. Pakistan's emerging economic relations with China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and China's assertiveness in the South China Sea (SCS) has forced Russia to build China-Russia-Pak axis. Indeed, Russia has joined China and Pakistan on board to build its regional hegemony. Subsequently, it would help Pakistan to tackle the issue of threatening US-Indian alliances in the region.

Mounting interventions of the US in the region like the South China Sea (SCS) dispute, dragging regional states in War on Terror (WoT) has forced Russia to make regional alliances via its Asia-pivot policy.

Hence, it is clear that the US-Asia led administration has only given rise to the regional offenses. It has supported India against Pakistan, deteriorated the economy of Pakistan under the shade of war on terror. The US strategy of regional influence appeared to be uncertain and has caused regional disintegration. Its' domineering attitude has stricken at the foundations of the fabric of the regional stability.

Thus, the suggested China-Pakistan-Russia axis would be favorable for the socio-political and economic development of Asia.

