

The geostrategic rectangle: Russia-China-USA-India

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Abstract. In the second half of XX century the international policy is dominated by the geostrategic triangle: USSR-China-USA. USA succeeded to play Chinese card against USSR. As a result USSR collapsed and, since that moment, China and USA started to consider each other as major competitors in policy, economy and security.

In between, Russia emerged from the collapsed USSR and, at the beginning of XXI century the triangle is already USSR-China-USA.

India played its own role during that time and recently the importance of the country at the international arena increases.

To win against overwhelmed Russia and the new rival China, USA tries to create strategic partnership with the other powers. Apart from the traditional allies – EU, Great Britain and Japan – USA tries to attract into its coalition the new rising super-power – India.

At the same time, Russia and China also look to build strategic partnerships with India.

So, the geostrategic triangle – Russia-China-USA – is going to become a geostrategic rectangle – Russia-China-USA-India.

Keywords: geostrategy, security, great powers

Introduction

According to the theory of the powers or poles (Stoynov, 2021), even today India is a strong power (strong pole) and if the classification is based on GDP PPP (reflecting the real economy power, without financial sector), India is absolute power (absolute pole).

By 2050 the prognoses are that India will be the second largest economy by GDP PPP with GDP PPP about 44 trillion dollars. The first place will be for China (with about 58 trillion dollars). And USA will be at third place (with about 34 trillion dollars GDP PPP). Russia, with GDP PPP of about 7 trillion dollars will be at sixth place, after Indonesia (10,5 trillion dollars GDP PPP, fourth place) and Brazil (7,5 trillion dollars, fifth place) (Ranked, 2021).

By 2050 the prognoses are that India will be the largest country by population with population about 1 600 000 000 people. It will be followed by China (1 400 000 inhabitants), Nigeria (400 000 000 inhabitants) and USA (380 000 000 inhabitants) (Ined, 2021).

So, from these prognoses it is clear that India will be by 2050 an absolute power, comparable with China. The today's leader USA, striving to keep its leadership will try to make India its ally against China. For this purpose it tries to use the boundary issues between China and India as earlier the border issues between China and USSR were used to separate USSR and China and finally to make China a partner of USA against USSR.

This leads to forming in next decade of an interesting geostrategic rectangle –Russia-China-USA-India - which updates the triangle Russia-China-USA.

Russia-China-USA

The two new centers of power – China and Russia – are exposed to the risk of entering in direct conflict with the Western powers – USA and their allies. This scenario is described by the American expert Graham Allison (Allison, 2017). In this conflict China and Russia have a chance to survive only in close alliance.

In 80s of XX century USA play the Chinese card against USSR. The West supports the reforms in China promising to the country that, if China accepts capitalism, it will become a full member of the Western family as Japan, after the Second World War. China performs reforms but keep its sovereignty and the leading role of The

Chinese Communist Party while in USSR, the communist party is removed and this leads to national security crisis, disintegration and collapse of USSR.

After 4 of July 1989, between USA and China happens disagreement. This is the end of the period of good relations which started with the „opening” of China by Nikson in 1972. Chinese Communist Party is concerned about its power due to the events at Tienanmen square. The events at Tienanmen are considered in China as the first large offensive of USA against China. This Chinese policy is strengthened by the collapse of USSR in 1991 which led to the transition of Eastern Europe countries to the American sphere of influence - China does not want to repeat the experience of USSR.

At geopolitical level an alliance between Russia and China is possible today based on the principle of the „distributed hartland”. To keep its geopolitical sovereignty, Russia must delegate its mission to other potential or real powers, to distribute the „hartland” in favour of China. This policy is realized through the Russian project „Large Eurasia”, first step of which is the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Chinese project “One belt, one road”. A natural vector for enlargement of SCO is the inclusion of India, Iran, Pakistan and some Arabic countries.

USA tries to prevent this enlargement and one of efforts to this end is to attract India as a strategic partner and to oppose the country to China and Russia. For this purpose, USA uses the border issues between India and China.

Russia-China-USA-India – competing strategies and border issues

The border issues between India and China originate since the creation of Republic of India and People Republic of China. An example is the recent crisis in Doklam.

Doklam issue came to force between June and July 2017, after a long quiet period at the Sino-Indian border in Sikkim, since the clashes at Cho-La in 1967. “However, there has always been a problem with the China-India-Bhutan trijunction.” (Manoj, 2017).

In 2007, India deploys forces to the region when China destroyed a number of Indian bunkers in the Batang La area.

China laid claim to a 2,1 sq km area in North Sikkim (Manoj, 2017).

The issue is about where the trijunction lies. According to India and Bhutan, it is 200 m south-east from Batang La. Chinese maps show that it is at a point called Gimpochi. India has no claims on the territory between Batang La and Gimpochi and considers it Bhutanese.

On 16 June Chinese brought heavy road-building equipment to this area to build a road between Doka La and the Bhutanese post on Jamperi ridge. This provoked the Indian intervention on June 18 to block the road construction and the beginning of the 2017 Doklam crisis (Manoj, 2017).

But today India and China have more interest in collaboration than in competition.

Not only USA, but also China, from its side, tries to establish a good partnership with India. And Russia also. So a geostrategic rectangle Russia-China-USA-India is formed.

Conclusion

In the middle of XXI century, the relations between the countries of the geostrategic rectangle - Russia-China-USA-India - will determine the international relations at global level and will shape the world for decades ahead.

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