

Emergence of Golden Ring Axis: Alliance of China, Russia, Turkey, Pakistan and Iran



The United States emerged as a global super power after the disintegration of Soviet Union and the position of US remained undisputed even in the aftermath of cataclysmic events of September 11 attacks. Since then the US decision makers have been on the agenda to spread their influence globally. Their agenda ranges from security centric policies, Westernization or liberalization (spread of their values), promoting democracy and extensive regionalism. Such policies have been adopted by the US to maintain her global hegemony. However, due to the new complexities in the international politics, such as rise of non-state actors, new security actors, globalization or state losing its role as the only primary actor, the world politics is undergoing a continuous

transition. West is no more the exclusive epicenter of the world order, rather a shift is taking place towards East. The world in the near future or several decades later might be moving towards a multipolar international order. In the wake of growing American hegemony, China successfully instigated a counterstrategy, called Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). The new center of rivalry, as seen by defense experts can be the region of Indian Ocean. The manifestation of the increasing competition is already visible in the region. With such security developments, the great powers have also engaged in the strategic power play for securing their interests in the Eurasian Region. On the other hand, China and Russia, growing economically and militarily are introducing new security paradigms for safeguarding their common interests. In the post 9/11 period, the geopolitics is emerging to be more and more complex, because US, China, Russia and European countries are getting involved in the global politics.

A Russian scholar, Andrew Koryobkov introduced the concept of "Golden Ring of Security," in his article "From Bandwagoning against Eurasia to Circling the Wagons in the Center of it". The world politics, with new security paradigms is likely to experience a diminishing influence of the Global War on Terror. The leadership in the US is focused more on establishing strategic partnerships against the strategic competitors and the old adversaries. The competition between the prominent rivals the US, China and Russia can result into a New Cold War, and the mindset of the leaders is more inclined towards a zero sum game. The hegemonic status of the US is being challenged with the formation of the new interconnected power blocs, specifically against US in the Eurasian region. The states weaker than the superpower, emerging powers or the great powers are to enter into alliances, and participate in bandwagoning. The rationale behind the bandwagoning is to derange the stronger aggressor from changing the existing balance of power. In this realm, both China and Russia have engaged into forming new alliances in

the region to turn the balance of power in their favor. Thus, there is a natural gravitation of countries like Pakistan, Iran and Turkey to enter into Eastern bloc against the United States.



The Golden Ring of Security, is therefore a security arrangement comprised of significant states, which will eventually form a power alliance. The bilateral security partnership between China and Moscow is strengthening, who will be influencing the future of the new security order and the transition of the world politics against the waning power of the United States. In 216, the bilateral partnership transformed to trilateral partnership between China, Pakistan and Russia. In the years later, the trilateral partnership included several other states- Turkey and Iran. The alliances between these countries are expected to be extended to include the trouble spots of the world such as Afghanistan and Central Asia. But that is only dependent on the Afghan peace process and its outcomes. Organizations such as Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) are becoming crucial as they are playing a pivotal role in promoting multilateralism and increased engagement in terms of economic and security in the region.

The emerging powers, China and Russia both have a common rival that is the United States and its global dominance. Therefore, for countering the hegemony of the US, a new “Golden Ring” comprising Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran and Turkey, is becoming the modern day reality. It is no surprise that in recent years, more and more countries are moving towards China. The reality is not limited to the states, but also the international organizations are coming under the umbrella of China. Such new changes in the international arena are a consequent of the United States’ policies of disengagement. Previously the champion of multilateralism, is abandoning her own policies and adopting more inward looking policies (make America great again). In such a global scenario, a vacuum is appearing that China and Russia are trying to fill with the help of forming new alliances. Strengthening ties regionally will have geostrategic implications for United States and Israel. This in can have far reaching repercussions for India as well, as it might be isolated from the neighboring countries due to the new alliances. A Russian Defense Analyst, Michail Boris tweeted:

Modi's racist policy and Emergence of Asia's mutual alliance of Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran & Turkey: Due to Modi's racist policy India is alone among its neighbors. Its traditional rival Pakistan is getting stronger day by day. China will do everything for its CPEC.

Besides countering hegemony of the US, another purpose of this alliance is to bring stability and peace to the region which was disrupted by the initiation of the Afghan War, which continues even today. Peace in the region will directly have a positive impact on strengthening the position of China and Russia, because a peaceful neighborhood will resolve the issues that are present in the region at the moment. The most logical way to counter the common adversary is a robust Sino-Russian alliance. The “golden ring” is now taking shaping and bringing the regional countries together for influencing the

international security paradigms and the world order.

Sea Control by Pakistan Navy in 1965 War



Kashmir is termed as the 'jugular vein' of Pakistan as all major rivers originate from there. The agricultural prosperity and power generation of the country is dependent on the waters of these rivers. It is an unfinished agenda of partition. By 15 August 1947, all the 600 princely states except Junagarh, Hyderabad, and state of Jammu & Kashmir had acceded to either Pakistan or India on the principle underlying the partition of British India, that Muslim majority states to join Pakistan and non-Muslim majority states to join India. According to book of S.M. Bruke, Pakistan's Foreign Policy (p 17-27) the state of Jammu & Kashmir, popularly known as Kashmir had overall 78% Muslims, but in the valley of Kashmir Muslims were

93%. The ruler was Maharaja Hari Singh a Hindu. He initially wanted Kashmir to become independent but it was not possible as per partition rules. India sent its troops to Kashmir and occupied in October 47. In accordance with partition rules the princely state of Jammu & Kashmir should have been part of Pakistan. The first war between India and Pakistan over Kashmir was fought 1947/48. India approached the United Nations asking to intervene. The United Nations recommended holding a plebiscite to settle the question of whether the state would join India or Pakistan which have not yet taken place. Indian occupied Kashmir (IOK) was given special status within the Indian constitution, which guaranteed that it would have independence over everything except communications, foreign affairs, and defense. This special status (article 370 of Indian constitution) was revoked by the Indian government on 5 August 2019. A meeting of the members of Security council was held in mid-August to discuss the Kashmir issue at the request of Pakistan. After the close door meeting, China's Ambassador Jun Zhang told reporters that Council members feel that India and Pakistan should both stop from any unilateral action over Kashmir. The fact that Kashmir issue was discussed in the highest diplomatic forum of the world is testimony to Pakistan's point of view that this is an international dispute. Since then India has imposed locked down in Kashmir and continuously committing atrocities on the residents. Pakistan government is highlighting these aspects at every forum. Pakistani citizens should also expose Indians by whatever means available about the illegal occupation of Kashmir and mayhems being committed on the inhabitants. In short Kashmir is a major dispute which has yet to be resolved between India and Pakistan. It is considered main hindrance for normalization of relations. Border skirmishes take place on the Line of Control(LOC) frequently.

In early January 1965, dispute of Rann of Kutch emerged. According to Abdul Sattar book, Pakistan's Foreign Policy (p102-105), India contested 3,500 miles area north of 24

degrees parallel. Fighting flared up in April. British government persuaded both sides to agree to cease fire which took place on 1 May. later on the issue was resolved by a Tribunal. Keeping this in view, Pakistan Navy (PN) was ready for any more eventuality. In the next few months PN units remained extra alert and went to sea frequently. Had embarked fuel, ammunition and stores for war. In the meantime, operation Gibraltar was executed by the Army in early August 1965 calling for incursions by Kashmiri volunteers into IOK. It was assumed that large scale Indian offensive is not likely. But India launched an offensive on the international border on 6 Sep with the objective to capture Lahore which was countered effectively. Hence all-out war commenced, India as aggressor. According to Jane's fighting Ships of 1965-66, PN had a cruiser, a submarine and 7 destroyers (DDs)/ frigates (FFs), whereas India had an Aircraft carrier, two cruisers, and 19 DDs/ FFs. Indian Navy (IN) had considerable numerical superiority. Correct ratio between the two navies cannot be determined because PN did not have Aircraft Carrier, it may be assessed as 1:5. According to the book Story of the Pakistan Navy (p216-20), role assigned to PN was Sea word defense of Pakistan, keep sea lines of communication open, interdiction of shipping, thwart amphibious landing and assist army in the riverine operations in former East Pakistan. India had deployed an Aircraft carrier, 2 cruises and 14 DDs/ FFs on the East coast and 5 DDs/ FFs on their West coast. PN Submarine Ghazi was deployed off Bombay area to sink heavy units of IN that is Aircraft Carrier Vikrant and two heavy cruisers, Delhi and Mysore. She sailed on 2 Sep and was in her patrol area off Bombay on 5 Sep. Vikrant and Delhi were refitting in Bombay. Mysore was operational in Cochin harbor. It was assessed that Mysore will move north towards Bombay but it never left Cochin area. PN received message about starting of hostilities by India at 0630 on 6 Sep. PN units were preparing to leave harbor at 0800 for weekly exercise program and left harbor before 0800 and moved towards their assigned patrol stations. Naval control of shipping organization was activated to

effectively control merchant ships. An embargo was declared on all merchant ships carrying war like stores to India. The river routes used by Indian steamers transiting through former E Pak were sealed. Orders were issued to seize all such vessels and their cargo. All these action were taken swiftly in order to inflict severe losses to the enemy in terms of valuable cargo, ships and river craft. In the afternoon of 7 Sep while the Task force comprising cruiser Babur and six destroyers and frigates was on patrol, orders were issued to carry out bombardment of Dwarka from a distance as close as of 5.5 nautical miles. The main objective was to destroy radar station, to draw heavy IN units out of Bombay for Ghazi to attack, lower morale of Indians, and to divert Indian air effort away from northern area close to Karachi. The city of Dwarka was completely blacked out. Bombardment was started about 30 minutes past midnight and completed in five minutes. Each ship fired 50 rounds. The Task Group safely arrived on its patrol station at 0630 on 8 Sep after successfully completing the mission. IN ships did not come out even after bombardment therefore, Ghazi was assigned patrol off the Indian Kutch coast. On 22 Sep she managed to get an IN frigate as its target. She carried out attack with four torpedoes at 7: 11 pm. The commanding officer, commander K R Niazi (retired as CNS) and second in command Lt Commander Ahmad Tasnim (retired as Vice Admiral) got gallantry awards Sitara e Jurrat (SJ). Hardly any movement of IN unit was observed in the North Arabian Sea and in the Bay of Bengal during the entire 16 days war. The PN had achieved Sea Control (establishment of naval superiority in areas where operations were intended to be conducted) of North Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal in the classic sense. However, the government accepted the cease fire on 22 September. The PN task force remained at sea till 27 Sep to meet any contingency. The PN dominated the IN which was about 5 times more in strength by her superior training, planning, foresight, and courageous execution of operations.

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