Global Security concerns in Indo-Pacific

What is the issue?

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Global security concerns and interests are now getting focused on Indo-Pacific part of the world more than on any other.

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What are the factors that have led to the shift?

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- The confrontation between the NATO alliance and the Warsaw Pact nations came to an end with the collapse of the former Soviet Union by 1990,.
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- The economic rise of Japan and then of China further altered the equations eastwards.
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- The increasing dependence of both on energy resources from the Gulf added to the new scenario.
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- Several nation-state tensions, some leading to conflict, were endemic to the region.
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- These were coupled by the activities of non-state actors through piracy and then through terrorism.
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What are the global interests in the region?

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- America has serious military assets in the Western Pacific with bases in Japan, South Korea, Australia and Singapore.
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- China is interested in the East and South China Seas and becoming more proactive in IOR stance and naval deployments.
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- Japan also has naval facilities and with its dependence on Gulf energy, must be reckoned as an important Indo-Pacific player.
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- “Two-ocean” nations such as Australia, or those who are at the three vital chokepoints that connect the “Indo” part with the Pacific — Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia are also interested in the region
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- The fact that one of the vital shipping routes of the world runs across the stretch only adds to global concerns.
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How India responds?

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- 40% of our GDP comes from trade, of which 90% moves across the Indo-Pacific sea routes.
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- India’s responses to the developing situation need to be analysed at two levels.
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- American interests and its presence in the region are positive to India’s concerns.
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- The US sees India as a major IOR littoral power which can and should act as a “net security provider”,
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- India has an interest in seeing that the waters permit safe and free movement of commerce in keeping with international laws.
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- **But the navy’s share in the defence budget is lowest in several decades at 1.63 per cent of GDP.**
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- **It is not good enough** to ensure that our maritime capabilities will be able to cope with the increasing volatility.
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- India must also strive to help the smaller island nations in exploring their waters for oil and gas, as it is doing in Vietnam, and later in deep sea mining for minerals.
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Source: Business Standard

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