

# RISING POWERS, POWER SHIFT, AND REGIONAL SECURITY IMPACTS

**Major General ANM Muniruzzaman (Retd.)**

President

Bangladesh Institute of Peace and Security Studies (BIPSS)

# Lay out of the Presentation

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- Emergence of the New Power Dynamics
- Competition Over Sea
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- Security Challenges
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# Introduction

- In the post Cold War period the Asia-pacific region has become the hub of attention in the international arena because of its increasing strategic weight.
- The dynamic repositioning and intersecting interests of the US, China, Japan, India, and Russia is potentially a combustible mix in which all stakeholders desire its harmonious management.



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- The most compelling security challenge of the Asia-pacific region is the realignment of the regional and global powers.
- To uphold common security, the Asia-Pacific countries need to join hands and heads together in a timely and effective manner.

# Emergence of the New Power Dynamics

- The security of the Asia-pacific region is no longer shaped predominantly by the choices and preferences of the USA.
- The major stakeholders of the region i.e. China, India, Japan, and Russia are coming into the scenario with their clear strategic intent.
- Lesser powers of the region i.e. Australia, South Korea etc. are also coming into the scenario with their strategic intent. So, it is quite interesting to see whether the major powers will maintain their 'status quo' or give a space to them to advance their strategic interest.

# Emergence of the New Power Dynamics (Contd.)

- All the emerging powers are positioning and repositioning themselves to advance their interest in the region.
- This is a moment of transition which is going to shape the future of the region to a great extent.
- As the region's long-standing security order is in a mode of changing, the kind of arrangements that are likely to emerge in its place remain unknown and very much unpredictable.

# Emergence of the New Power Dynamics (Contd.)

- With the emergence of new power dynamics, the question remains whether the existing regional groups will feel comfortable with this new trend?
- The key challenges, therefore, lie whether this transition take place in a stable manner without bringing any destabilization on the region as a whole.

# Competition Over Sea

- In the Asia-pacific region, control of sea has become the central point of dominance among the competing powers of the region.
- Emerging powers are naturally in a naval expansion mode, thereby raising the issue of naval conflicts in the region to a great extent.



# Competition Over Sea (Contd.)

- The issues related to the South China Sea are coming to the forefront for multilateral discussion i.e. Spratly, Paracel and others.
- In March 2010, Chinese officials referred the South China Sea as the “core interest” of the country whereas USA treated it as a “Strategic Interest”. This can potentially lead to the creation of new tensions across the region.



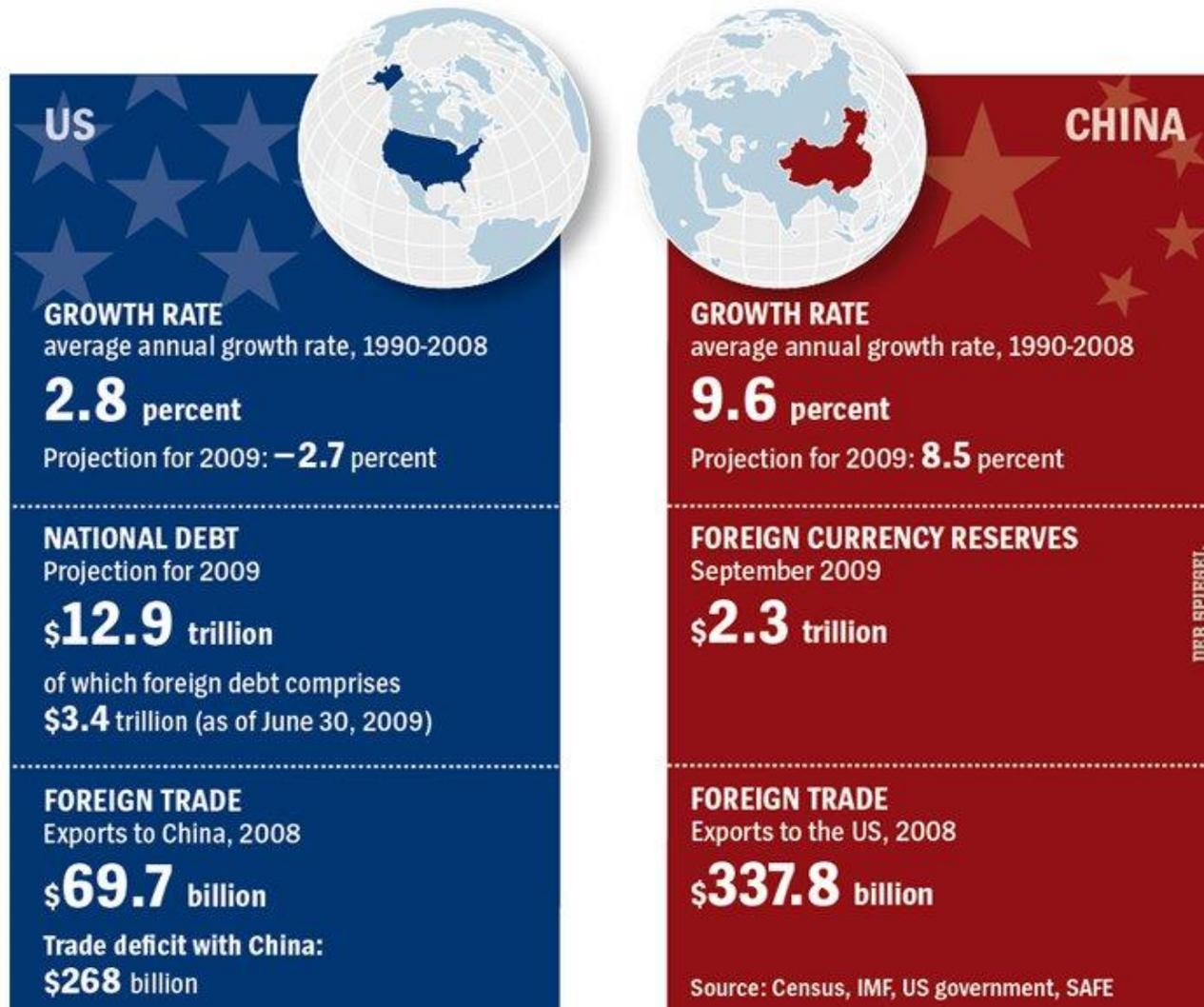
Pic: Paracel and Spratly Islands in the South China Sea

# Competition Over Sea (Contd.)

- The potentiality of a maritime competition between China and India over Indian Ocean is also looming large as both countries are expanding their spheres of influence across the Indian Ocean.
- This situation can potentially fuel conflicts in the coming decades among the major stakeholders which in turn can undermine the peace and stability of the region.



# Economic Shift



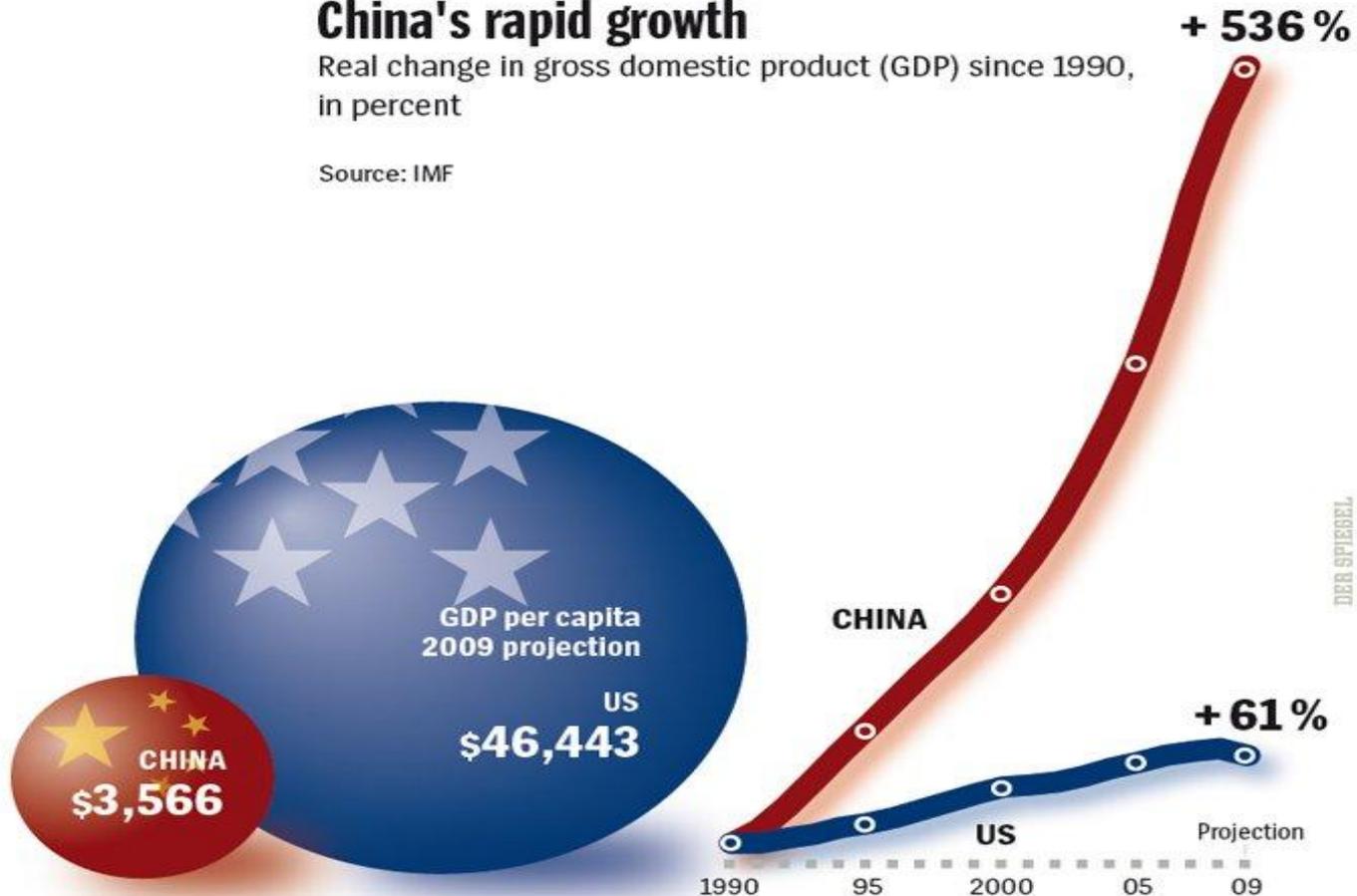
Economic Comparison between USA and China

# Economic Shift (Contd.)

## China's rapid growth

Real change in gross domestic product (GDP) since 1990, in percent

Source: IMF



- Economic Comparison between USA and China

# Security Challenges

## Managing power relations among the rising powers

- The Asia-pacific region is experiencing the rise of the two emerging power i.e. India and China, the relations of which is mired by occasional ups and downs.
- Historically, the rising powers have not been in such a close geographical proximity as India and China which can potentially lead to the emergence of new tensions between them (two front war/Arunachal).
- There is already a sign of growing competition between these two powers to exercise their preeminence in the region.
- Besides, the current dynamics in the US-China-Japan-Australia is also the clear manifestation of the emergence of a new regional order.

## Managing power relations among the rising powers (Contd.)

- While these countries are seeking to establish cooperative relations among themselves, signs of emerging competition are also evident.
- The relationship among these powers in the region will continue to be a complex one in the coming decades.
- Managing the uncertainties in the future direction of major power relations, therefore, serves as a major challenge for the Asia-pacific region.

# Arms Race

- A growing trend of arms race is obvious in the region.
- According to the Defence White Paper of March 2009, Australia will spend more than \$70 billion over the next twenty years to build a strong military.
- India is planning to procure arms worth \$50bn over the next 5 years.
- In March, 2011 China announced a near-13 percent increase in annual defence expenditures to \$91.4 billion (CNAS 2011)
- Japan, South Korea, Thailand, Singapore, Vietnam and Malaysia have also increased their military expenditures and annual military budget
- These developments indicate a clear arms race and insecurity among the countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

# Challenges to the Efficacy of the Existing Security Architecture

- Security architecture comprises institutions or associations that shape the context and organization of a region's security order.
- In the Asia-pacific region, there are economic and security institutions, with divergent memberships and varying degree of regional coverage, such as ASEAN, APEC and SCO.
- There exists serious debate over the relative role and efficacy of the existing instruments of security governance in the region.

## Challenges to the Efficacy of the Existing Security Architecture (Contd.)

- There is a general consensus that ASEAN and its various offshoots (ASEAN+3, ASEAN Regional Forum) act as the linchpin for community building in the asia-Pacific region.
- Given the current context, there is a growing debate that the region needs a new architecture that will able to engage in the full spectrum of dialogue on the future challenges related to the security and stability of the region.
- In such situation, it will also be critical to see how the ADMM and ADMM+, which are the highest defence mechanism within the ASEAN, shape itself to accommodate with the new security architecture.

# The withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan

- The withdrawal of the US troops could have negative repercussions which will affect not only the South Asian region but the wider Asia Pacific as well.
- The withdrawal may encourage fundamentalists and extremists in other parts of the region who will see it as the victory of the Afghan Taliban.



# The withdrawal of the US troops from Afghanistan (Contd.)

- There is also a danger that the withdrawal will lead to the Taliban returning to power in Afghanistan, thereby, allowing al-Qaeda renewed access to the country making use of Afghanistan to successfully attack far beyond the country.
- The withdrawal of the US forces is likely to create a power vacuum which can lead to a growing competition between the existing powers of the region to fill the vacuum.



# Nuclear Proliferation

- The emergence of an increasing number of nuclear weapons states and the attendant threat of proliferation has become a major area of concern in recent years.
- The nuclear tests by India and Pakistan and their competition to build up capabilities, including those that reach beyond their sub-region are a clear manifestation of this.



# Nuclear Proliferation (Contd.)

- China continues to modernize its nuclear and ballistic missile capabilities which are apparent from its dramatic build-up of short-range missiles and intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) force.
- This intersected with U.S. withdrawal from the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty and deployment of ballistic missile defenses.
- Russia is also considering abrogating the Treaty on Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) in order to resurrect a deterrent for Asia.
- The nuclearisation of the North Korea has also become a critical ingredient to the security of the Asia-pacific region.

# Nuclear Proliferation (Contd.)

- All of this fuels a new debate in Asia about nuclear “tipping points” and the possibility that the NPT might collapse in the coming days.
- There also remains speculation about the nuclear ambition of Myanmar which deepens the concerns among others.
- Such situation has triggered fears in Asia that a new sort of nuclear arms race—one with an offensive/ defense dimension—is in the offing.

# Energy Security

- Energy has become a very critical component of security in the Asia-pacific region.
- Energy concerns are reshaping the relations and interactions among the major powers of the region as all the three Asian giants India, China and Japan are major world importers of energy.
- It remains to be seen how India, China and Japan configure themselves in relations to each other in the future world of sharp energy crunch.



# Terrorism

- The threat of terrorism and ideological extremism is likely to increase in the region.
- The insurgent and terrorist threat in Afghanistan and Pakistan is likely to continue and even grow in the coming decades and spill over to neighbouring countries.
- In the Southern Philippines and southern Thailand the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) and a few ethno-nationalist Muslim groups continue to fight their respective governments.
- Ideological penetration and threat of Hizb-ut Tahrir and Al-Akramia continue to grow in Uzbekistan.



# Terrorism (Contd.)

- Politicization and radicalization of new generation of recruits are still a major cause of concern in the region.
- There is also a growing danger that the terrorist groups are striving to acquire the Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) in their hand.
- If the possibility of acquiring nuclear dirty bombs by terrorist groups comes true then it will have unpredictable consequences to the security and stability of the region.

# Conclusion

- Adaptation to change and dealing with newer challenges require enhanced collective regional capacity.
- Traditional and non-traditional security issues are increasingly posing threats and damaging the relations and interactions among states in the region.
- To cope with this trend, it is imperative to strengthen the regional institutions and the capacity of the states to converge their interests.
- Only enhanced mutual understanding and collaboration can bring peace, stability and prosperity in the region.



# Thank You

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