

“Indo-Japanese Dialogue on Eurasia”: A Summary
-Challenges to Traditional Geopolitics and the Old World Order?-

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The roundtable panel “Indo-Japanese Dialogue on Eurasia” hosted and funded by the “Regional Powers” programme at the Slavic Research Centre that took place on March 11th consisted of three experts including Dr. Rajaram Panda, Dr. Arvind Gupta and Commander S. S. Parmar from the Institute of Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and three from SRC including Dr. Akihiro Iwashita, Prof. Shinichiro Tabata and Dr. Yujun Feng (visiting scholar from the Chinese Institutes of Contemporary International Relations).



The panel kicked off with Professor Iwashita’s presentation as he challenged the classical questions of geopolitics in Eurasia and demonstrated a shift in conflict zones from land borders to sea borders in Eurasia.

Next speaker was Dr. Gupta, standing diplomat of the Indian Foreign Service as well as the Lal Bahadur Shastri Chair of the IDSA. Dr. Gupta concentrated on Indo-Russian security relations and factors that affect India’s security environment and dimensions. He stressed on the factors that affect India’s security environment (dimensions) including the nuclear question, relations with the U.S., India-China relations particularly the simultaneous rise of India and China and maritime issue in the region.



Professor Tabata challenged the notion of a new economic world order with the rise of India and China, however, he demonstrated his expert opinion that this may not necessarily be the case as there is still the insistence on the continuity of the Bretton Woods system even though there are several indications that it is becoming more and more difficult to maintain this system.

Commander Parmar from the perspective of a naval officer presented his expert opinion on the notion of the rise of China, the possibility of its threat militarily or more specifically the possibility of conflict between India and China on border issues, however, he emphasized that there are indications that there are willingness on both sides to resolve the issues in peaceful manner abiding by U.N. conventions and international law.

Professor Feng presented the current issues of China's border security and stressed that although there are discussions on the rise of China and the possible military threats it poses, however, there is a gap between mutual understanding, thus, it is important to work toward a multifaceted (or multilateral) framework and institutions for cooperation among concerned countries.

Professor Ito raised some comments to the panellists which included the necessity to look at the rise of China and India not in the bilateral context but in the global context, the feasibility of conflict resolution between China and India regarding border issues and the rise in the military capabilities and increase in the military expenditure of both countries.

Some of the questions raised and considered in the discussion included the consideration to strategic factors among India, Russia, Japan and China, potentiality of new "alliances" in the region that do not include the U.S and what kinds of proactiveness could be possible in international affairs.

As Professor Feng mentioned, we now live in a new world than that found by Columbus in the 16th and 17th century, and the three crucial differences are the existence

of national laws to regulate sea activities, the presence of nuclear power and the phenomenon of globalization not for conflict but for cooperation. As students of international relations, we must continue to question whether regional powers are really a threat to the “old” world order and we are moving towards a trend for a new world order. Traditional game players have played their game and have aged, and the game now includes new teams with new players, but we must also realize old rules still do apply. What does the rise of China and India mean in our difference fields of expertise? What are the implications to security, both border and maritime, and also to the global economy? What are the feasibilities of new and creative multilateral cooperation and forum to new global challenges and threats such as politics of energy or terrorism? This roundtable panel “Indo-Japan Dialogue on Eurasia” was an opportunity to bring experts in each respective field to consider such vital issues in international politics and the “Regional Powers” programme will continue its mission to explore new possibilities to new challenges in the world that we live in today.