

National Security: One Goal different Strategies in Presidents Joseph Biden and Donald Trump

In the last couple of week since President Joseph Biden's presidency began, several executive orders were signed to upturn some of former President Donald Trump's actions in the last four years. Of these the national security front was primary to the Biden administration. It is not that the time tested aim of national security as enshrined in the philosophy and legislation called the National Security Act of 1947 changed since Biden came into the Oval office. It is that the strategy used by President Trump in the pursuing national security is being given a human face.

Presidents Trump and Biden did not change the pursuit of economic and strategic resources anywhere and everywhere in the world as the underpinning aim of national security in the United States. This philosophy is sacrosanct and inviolable.

Among the two institutions in the frontline of the realisation of the strategy of national security are the State and Defence Departments. President Biden began his visit aimed at resetting the button, away from the Trump era strategy, in the State Department. The State deploys its resources of diplomacy etc. with the Pentagon's muscles closely supporting the State in the background.

The State is at the centre of the pursuit of national security of America in the world. President Biden had announced to the staff that "America is back" and "diplomacy is back". America was ready to re-engage with the world, with institutions, alliances and multilateralism as strategies for the attainment of national security.

Under the Trump America First National Security Strategy, the focus was nationalistic and America-centric with the Pentagon playing the lead role rather than the State in the search and attainment of national security. The administration jettisoned diplomacy and took the path of doing-it-alone as it opened battles on several fronts including NATO, China, multilateral trade deals, multilateral agreements, climate change, United Nations, Iran, North Korea amongst others in its bid to maximise America's security interest. It pursued the Muslim ban, immigration, construction of the wall in its southern borders and generally antagonised friends and allies in its four years in office.

Yet the goal remained the same - the attainment of national security for Americans. As a business man occupying the Oval office, President Trump called a spade by its name and refused to hide under diplomatic niceties as his administration pursued national security. This could be seen in his Muslim ban, building walls, taking on NATO for not contributing to their own defence in tandem with agreement, reducing trade deficit and advantage enjoyed by China, slamming the World Health Organisation, the United Nations, siding with Israel in

the Middle East and taking adversarial role against the Palestinian in the pursuit of the two states solution and in bringing other Middle East countries to the negotiation table etc.

In pursuing National Security anywhere and everywhere in the world, the National Security Strategy of President Trump did not differ from President Biden. They are both focused on economic and strategic resources with the Trump's America First National Security Strategy jettisoning diplomacy in the pursuit of economic and trade interest of America.