

## Rigid alliances will be avoided: India

S. Jaishankar

A week after joining the first official-level meeting of the new quadrilateral grouping in the Asia Pacific region, India on Monday stressed that it will avoid rigid geopolitical alliances. Launching a new policy-oriented club for diplomats, Foreign Secretary S. Jaishankar reaffirmed India's expanding commitments internationally and said that in view of the global uncertainties, India will have an "open-minded approach" to international politics.

"It is important to recognise that we are in a period of major transition, where many of the assumptions that guided our thinking in the past are no longer valid. This calls for a more open minded approach in international politics where there are less fixed points and more flexible combinations. Our earlier mindset of broadening our options in a structured work must give way to the understanding that rigidity of positions and alliances no longer hold and we ourselves are one of the poles," said Mr. Jaishankar.

He was speaking at the launch of the PHD Ambassadors Club here, which will be serve as a platform for former Indian envoys and resident foreign envoys to interact and cooperate on hard and soft diplomatic issues.

### Cautionary position

Mr. Jaishankar said in the current order, optimal use of human resource alone can boost a country's standing. In that direction, the PHD Ambassadors Club was an initiative where diplomacy would converge with commercial goals of Indian foreign affairs.

The Foreign Secretary's comments about the alliances indicate that India will continue to adopt a cautionary position regarding the budding groupings and alliances in the morphing world order.

This is the second time in a week that the top diplomat of India has sounded a note of caution in international affairs. A day after the first quadrilateral meeting in Manila, Mr. Jaishankar had downplayed the meeting, arguing that the alliance was one of the many such groupings that India had recently participated in.

### Instability

He explained that the position was borne out of the Indian analysis of recent history, where the end of the Cold War was followed by the subsequent rise of the Asian powers like China and India and the more recent 'recalibration' of the Western powers that were going through a phase of instability and change.

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