

**Contemporary  
Japan-India Relations and the China factor**

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*"There are powerful, creative impulses  
and a new vitality in all the people of Asia,"  
Jawaharlal Nehru*

### **Abstract**

As a result of India and Japan's new strategic vision, Japan-India relations witnessed a positive momentum during the recent period. Both countries, Japan and India renewed their interest to each other recently. Both share a common vision on vital issues such as security, energy policy, position on greater political and economic engagement in Asia and potential for strategic and economic partnerships.

India accomplishing a dynamic development and its economic strength grows rapidly. Since the end of bipolar world, changes in India's foreign policy, its outlook and strategies are noticeable in the changing post-Cold War international environment. India is accommodating its foreign policy to increase its global influence and status in order to become a key global player. During recent years India expanded its strategic vision, notably in Asia and its military, diplomatic and economic power have expanded far beyond Jawaharlal Nehru's non-aligned position.

The paper will focus on the argument that, the rise and development of strategic, economic and security relations and cooperation between Japan and India cannot be out of attention in China and the rise of China as an economic and military power brings the both countries together on several issues. The attempts have been done to determine and analyze some of these issues in this paper. The two countries have common global objectives, which reinforce their security cooperation. There are expectations that, shared determination to raise bilateral relations follows by comprehensive partnership and cooperation in a higher level between Japan and India.

## I. Introduction

The 19<sup>th</sup> century was the European, the 20<sup>th</sup> century was the American, and supposition has been made by many, including academicians and politicians that the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be Asia's. Asia is now truly emerging as the leading growth centre of the global economy and exerting a greater influence in the global affairs. The peace, stability and development in Asia are indispensable for world peace and development and the future of the world is intimately linked to the future of Asia. Since the end of Cold War during the recent years some emerging powers from Asia, like China & India have been challenging the dominance of the traditional world powers. China, India & Japan, the three countries of Asia are already known as the great powers. In this regard, these three Asian countries are the main players, which can share and contest for influence and leadership. The hypothesis and assumption of Asian century basically will depend on these three countries – China, India and Japan. Prime Minister Wen Jiabao of China visited New Delhi in May 2005 and declared the two countries India and China as the linchpins of an "Asian century." <sup>1</sup> The relations between these three Asia's major powers China, India and Japan may become one of the most significant tasks in international affairs in current period. Emmott argues that the relationship between China, India and Japan is going to become increasingly difficult during the next decade or more. A whole array of disputes, historical bitteresses and regional flashpoints surround or weigh down upon all three countries.<sup>2</sup>

According to Hisashi Owada, Japan is finally emerging as a player on the world scene after living in the "dream world" and "psychological cocoon" of the Cold War and becoming a force to be reckoned with on the world stage - a situation that is bound to have a major effect on the country's relationship with its neighbors and with the United States. "This 'psychological cocoon' in which the Japan of the Cold War period smugly secluded herself from the outside realities of the world, came abruptly to an end with the demise of the Cold War. It would be easy to see that this new situation came as a shock on the minds of many Japanese. In a sense, the Japanese were thrown out into the harsh environment of the real world, with no clear sense of orientation." <sup>3</sup> Akihiko Tanaka, whose argument is quoted in the work of Kevin Cooney "Japan's Foreign Policy since 1945", mentioned that "Since the first diplomatic bluebook published in 1957 posited three elements of Japan's Foreign Policy – the importance of the ties with the free world, the affinity with Asia, and the importance of the United Nations, the Japanese have been struggling to find out the appropriate priority between the ties with the U.S. and the relations with Asia."<sup>4</sup>

Relations between India and Japan during the Cold War period were constrained due to the fact, that India pursued a non-aligned foreign policy and was in close relations and cooperation with the Soviet Union, and Japan was an

important ally of the US. From the 1960s to the 1980s the bilateral relations between India and Japan were relatively inactive, mainly because of different approaches towards international politics. Both countries had different political orientations. There is an argument (mostly by media), that both countries India and Japan were on the opposite sides of the Cold War politics.<sup>5</sup> But, although they were not on the “same” side, India and Japan were definitely not on the “opposite” sides of the Cold War either. In September 1951 at San Francisco 52 states have assembled to sign a peace treaty with Japan, a country defeated in WWII. However, India did not participate and did not join those countries, because of the understanding, that the Japanese Peace settlement was a component of the Cold War politics. Instead, India signed a separate peace treaty with Japan in June 1952, which was one of the first treaties Japan signed as an independent country since the Second World War.

Mansingh Lalit examines, that if India was guilty of dismissing Japan as a camp follower of the US, the Japanese in turn, perceived India as a ‘chaotic, dysfunctional, desperately poor country, and not as a potential partner’.<sup>6</sup> India’s outlook shaped nonalignment, peaceful coexistence and recognition of China’s place in the world. Japan’s position was based on alignment and containment of China. These differences influenced how both Japan and India viewed each other and adapted their responses to important problems in the world. As a result of this, both nations moved slowly and cautiously with respect to each other in political and security terms. Relations between them progressed extremely slowly and remained limited in economic, commercial and cultural spheres. However, Japan was the largest bilateral donor and major contributor of economic aid to India during the period of Cold War since the late 1950s and it is in the same position to the present. Japanese Prime Minister Kishi Nobusuke made a visit to India in May 1957. Following this visit the next year in 1958 Japan began to provide yen loans to India, as the first loan aid provided by Japan. In return, the first Prime Minister of independent India Jawaharlal Nehru made a visit to Japan later the same year in October 1957. As a result of these two high-level visits India received its Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) in 1958.

Today’s Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh as the head of Indian delegation at Indo-Japanese seminar in New Delhi in March 1986 described India and Japan as the two unequal partners “Whether we like it or not, I think the relations between India and Japan are those between two unequal powers. ...Perhaps Japan is a superpower with many other preoccupations, and worrying about Indian problems is not that much on the priority agenda.”<sup>7</sup> In the words of S.S. Menon there has never been any doubt about the compatibility between India and Japan. For India, Japan has always been a most admired partner and as the first Asian country that managed to develop without losing her identity, without losing her “Asianness.”<sup>8</sup> India traditionally has viewed Japan in the perspective of the common Asian identity. Relations between Japan and China at one hand and also India and China have been delicate. In this regard, rise and development of strategic, economic and security relations and cooperation between Japan and India cannot be out of attention in China.

This paper is divided into the introduction, two sections and conclusion. The first section will focus on the contemporary relations between India and Japan, especially since the end of Cold War till present. Rise and development of strategic and security relations and cooperation between India and Japan at one hand, and impact of these relations on China at another, will be under the discussion in this section. As part of the first section, attempts also will be done to analyze the perceptions of India and Japan towards the rise of China, its economic and military power. The second section will touch the issue of the China-India-Japan triangle; possibility, challenges and opportunities of this new suggestion for strategic and economic cooperation of these three Asian countries.

## **II. Japan-India Relations since the end of Cold War and China factor**

Since the end of the Cold War, relations between India and Japan stepped up. The 1980s marked the beginning of a new phase in Indo-Japan relations. One factor in bringing about a new approach was the first major joint venture between India and Japan, the *Maruti-Suzuki* plant to manufacture cars in India. Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Yasuhiro Nakasone made a visit to India in 1984, which was the first visit by a Japanese Prime Minister in 23 years. Since this visit of PM Y. Nakasone in 1984, Prime Minister of India Mr. Rajiv Gandhi made three visits to Japan in 1985, 1987 and 1988. These visits established a high-level political dialogue between the two countries. During Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's visit to Japan in November 1985 the Agreement on Science and Technology was signed between India and Japan, which stimulated and increased the frequency of exchanges in this area.

During the 1990s India began its "Look East" policy, which was developed and enacted during the governments of Prime Ministers P.V. Narasimha Rao (1991 - 1996) and Atal Bihari Vajpayee (1998 - 2004). India's "Look East" policy and the economic liberalization process in 1991 gave a further stimulus to the relations between India and Japan. According to Sikri the "Look East" policy of India increasingly constitutes a strategic dimension and component of India's foreign policy. Cooperation between India and the East Asian countries is a major prerequisite for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to become the century of Asia.<sup>9</sup> During this period - 1990s India redefined its nonalignment policy and reviewed its place in the world. Japan and India renewed their interest to each other since the end of Cold War and collapse of the bipolar world. Both entered a new world with their reviewed foreign policy in order to have a place in the world and global affairs, and have a political role and engagement in Asia and the world. Ambassador Eric Gonsalves, who chaired a session in IPCS Seminar "Towards India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership" 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007, IIC, New Delhi shared his views regarding the progress in relations between India and Japan and their role in international affairs, that "The Joint Statement between India and Japan is full of substance, indicating that we have moved a long way from the past and are

beginning to make progress. The centre of gravity in international affairs is returning to Asia.”<sup>10</sup>

Japan-India relations became chilled since India's nuclear test in 1998. Japan, as the only state and nation, which has suffered a nuclear attack in human history, joined the international community to criticize the mentioned India's nuclear test in May 1998 and suspended all political exchanges with India as well as official development assistance and economic assistance was frozen for nearly three years. However, matters appeared to be returning to normal when the Japanese State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Mr. Ichita Yamamoto visited India in October 1999. This was the first high-level political visit since India's nuclear test in 1998. In November 1999, India's Foreign Minister, Jaswant Singh, visited Japan, marking the normalization of relations between the two nations.<sup>11</sup> In August 2000, Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori made a five-day visit to India that helped the ice to be broken between the two nations. Japanese aid to India resumed after the visit of Prime Minister Mori to India in 2000, and the 9/11 terrorist attack in 2001.

During Mori's visit to India, India and Japan reached an agreement to establish "Japan-India Global Partnership in the 21st Century." In return after one year in December, 2001 Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee visited Japan, where "Japan-India Joint Declaration" was issued by the two nations' leaders, consisting of high-level dialogue, economic, military and anti-terrorism cooperation. Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited India in April, 2005, and signed Joint Statement "Japan-India Partnership in the New Asian Era: Strategic Orientation of Japan-India Global Partnership" with Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh. During the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi to India, both countries have agreed on strategic partnership to realise the full potential of their cooperation in diverse fields. An eight fold initiative has been outlined towards this end in a joint statement issued at the end of talks between Mr. Koizumi and Dr. Manmohan Singh that covered a wide-range of bilateral, regional and international issues. The joint statement, captioned "India-Japan Partnership in the New Asian Era: Strategic Orientation of India-Japan Global Partnership", said the two countries reiterated their support to each other for the permanent membership of the expanded UN Security Council. Both countries shared the view that it was important to take a decision on Security Council reforms before the Summit meeting in September 2005. "They note with satisfaction the on-going cooperation between Japan and India, including in the G-4 setting, to bring about reform of the U.N. Security Council, by expanding the membership of both permanent and non-permanent categories, to make the U.N. more representative, more credible and more effective."<sup>12</sup> Also, this joint statement of April 2005 stated the resumption of the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program that had remained suspended since 1979 due to policy changes by the Government of India in 1978. In April 2006, after a gap of 30 years, a JOCV group was sent to India to teach the Japanese language.<sup>13</sup>

During the period, when Japanese Prime Minister Abe was in office, the relations between the two countries developed and improved into the strategic

and global partnership. On August 2007 Prime Minister Abe gave a speech in the Indian parliament. In his speech, entitled 'Confluence of the Two Seas,' he noted that the "Japan-India relationship is blessed with the largest potential for development of any bilateral relationship anywhere in the world." Also he mentioned that "a strong India is in the best interest of Japan and a strong Japan is in the best interest of India."<sup>14</sup> "This will be the most important bilateral relationship (for Japan) in the world" told Mr. Abe while inaugurating the India-Japan Friendship Year-2007 on December 15. Mr. Abe, in his book, "Toward A Beautiful Country," published in July 2006, declares that, "It is of crucial importance to Japan's national interest that we further strengthen our relations with India." Mr. Abe optimistically states that "it will not be a surprise if in another 10 years, Japan-India relations overtake Japan-U.S. and Japan-China relations."<sup>15</sup>

A significant progress and improvements in bilateral relations of India and Japan became evident during the visits of Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh to Japan in 2006 and 2008. Relations between both countries entered a new era, especially since the October 2008 visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Japan, when the both side signed 'Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India'. The significance of this document lies in the fact that since WWII Japan had such a security pact only with the US and Australia. This may be an issue of concern in China, but Prime Minister Taro Aso said, "We regard security cooperation with India as very important ... and we do not have any assumption of a third country as a target such as China."<sup>16</sup> Regarding this matter Dr. Manmohan Singh said "Economic partnership and security cooperation between India and Japan are not at the cost of any third country, least of all China."<sup>17</sup>

During the recent years Japan and India have strengthened their bilateral relations, which cause concerns among Chinese scholars who fear that, these strong relations would 'contain' China. Regarding this Professor Sun Shihai Deputy Director of the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has argued, that "Japan and India have intensified bilateral relations recently causing concerns among scholars who fear the alliance would 'contain' China."<sup>18</sup> Another Chinese scholar like Ma Jiali of China Institute of Contemporary International Relations has shown their concern on Japan's intentions in making closer ties with India. "If Japan wants to have good relations with India it is okay. But if it is aimed at exerting pressure on China or containing China, it is dangerous."<sup>19</sup>

China is rising very rapidly and already during a short period of time became one of the world largest economies. In modern period China has achieved a level, that there is already recognition of its influence regionally and internationally. In this regard, it is difficult to imagine the security and defense policy of India and Japan without the Chinese factor. In relation to this matter, for instance a Japanese politician Ichita Yamamoto examines and argues that as China continues to increase its military spending by more than 10% per year and it now has the third largest military budget in the world, in this regards, security in Asia hinges upon China.<sup>20</sup>

The rise of China as an economic and military power brings the both countries India and Japan together on several issues based on historical and modern bases, such as:

- India and Japan both had stormy history with China;
- Japan and independent India never shared hostilities;
- Both countries India and Japan share a common vision on vital issues, like energy policy, security of sea lines in the Indian Ocean, and potential for economic partnership;
- There are common security interests between Japan and India;
- India and Japan can't see China as a hegemonic power in East Asia;
- India and Japan are the largest democracies in Asia;

### **III. China-India-Japan Triangle: The possibility of strategic cooperation or rivalry for leadership in Asia?**

Since Mr. Koizumi's visit to India in April 2005, there have been several important developments having a bearing on the triangular relationship involving India, Japan and China. The first was the surprise and significant visit of Mr. Shinzo Abe, who succeeded Mr. Koizumi as the Japanese Prime Minister, to China in October, 2006. Generally, the convention has been that a new Japanese Prime Minister visits the US first, underlying the importance attached by him to Japan's strategic relations with the US. Mr. Abe broke this convention and went to China first. Here two arguments may come out:

- Mr. Abe's move to improve relations with China was generally motivated by bilateral reasons and hence had little impact on Japan's relationship either with India or with the US.
- Mr. Abe's choice to visit China first as a new prime minister was not only a message to the US, but also to other countries of the world. It was a message to India, that as much as Abe was and his successors might be interested in strengthening relations and cooperation with India, Japan's primary interests goes to its immediate neighbors, first of all China.

The second was the visit of President Hu Jintao of China to India from November 20 to 23, 2006. The third was the visit of Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Singh to Japan from December 13 to 16, 2006. The fourth was the visit of Mr. Wen Jiabo, the Chinese Prime Minister, to Japan in April 2007. Since the visit of Mr. Zhu Rongji, the then Chinese Prime Minister, to Japan in 2000, there had been no visit to Japan by either the Chinese President or the Prime Minister. The fifth was the visit of Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe to India in August 2007. The sixth was the December 2007 visit of Prime Minister Mr. Yasuo Fukuda to China. The seventh was the visit of Chinese President Hu Jintao to Japan in May 2008. The eighth was the second visit of Dr. Manmohan Singh to India as the prime minister in October 2008. The ninth was the visit of Prime Minister Mr. Taro Aso of Japan to China in April 2009.

Before Dr. Manmohan Singh became the Prime Minister in May, 2004, there used to be a talk of a strategic triangular relationship involving India, Japan



and China. The debate on this idea was, in fact, initiated by the then Japanese Ambassador to India, Mr. Yasukuni Enoki, who was reported as saying that a China-Japan-India trilateral relationship would be conducive to regional stability and prosperity. He was also quoted as claiming that India and Japan had held informal discussions on the subject, but this idea had not been formally put to China.<sup>21</sup>

While the Chinese authorities refrained from commenting on this idea, it evoked interest in some sections of the Chinese academic circles. In an article contributed to the Government-controlled "People's Daily" on April 30, 2004, Mr. Feng Zhaokui, Research Fellow at the Japan Research Institute of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, said: "Among China, Japan and India there shouldn't be the kind of thinking of "pulling another over to one's side so as to contain the other" or joining hands with a superpower in regions outside Asia to contain or even encircle one of the three countries. China, Japan and India each lay great emphasis on the importance of relations with the United States. In the meantime, they should attach great importance to the mutual relations with one another rather than letting oneself become a pawn of a superpower outside Asia in containing one of the countries within the region. This is of particular importance in the case of Japan-US military alliance that shouldn't have the intent of targeting China. China, Japan and India each pay attention to developing relations with ASEAN; all want to establish a free trade area with ASEAN. In dealing with the relations with ASEAN, the three countries should build up a virtuous and healthy competitive relationship while at the same time enhance and strengthen their sense of urgency in cooperation among China, Japan and India."<sup>22</sup>

Deputy Director of the Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies under the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences Professor Sun Shihai argues, that "China, India and Japan should initiate strategic dialogues which would not only be beneficial for enhanced mutual trust but also for regional peace, stability and development. ...There is already bilateral strategic dialogue mechanism between China and India and China and Japan. We should try and promote a trilateral strategic dialogue between the three major powers for the benefit of Asia as a whole."<sup>23</sup>

However, we can see that differences do exist among Chinese scholars and analysts on the triangle of China-Japan-India. For instance, another Chinese scholar Liu Xuecheng, a researcher of the China Institute of International Studies, thinks that the parlance "China-Japan-India axis" contradicts the new security concept, and that bilateral cooperation among China, India and Japan is more realistic than trilateral cooperation. According to Liu Xuecheng China should serve as "axis" instead of "center" in Asian cooperation.<sup>24</sup>

The sense of distrust might be a reason that Chinese conduce to see the role of US behind the endeavors to bring India and Japan closer together. The Chinese may not see it as a result of India's "Look East" policy and change in Japan's foreign policy since the end of the Cold War and renewed interest of Japan and India to each other. Instead, they see as an American attempt to contain China. Before Dr. Manmohan Singh the Prime Minister of India made his visit to Japan in December 2006, his interview to the Japanese daily "Yomiuri

Shimbun" (December 5, 2006) became under the attention of China's India-Japan watchers and analyzers, basically because of two reasons. The first was, that Dr. Manmohan Singh differently characterized India's relations with Japan and India's relations with China. He characterized India and Japan as "the largest and the most developed democracies in Asia, which share a strong commitment to freedom, the rule of law and respect for human rights."<sup>25</sup> But, he characterized India and China as "the two largest developing countries" of Asia and added: "My own view is that the world is large enough to accommodate the development ambitions of both countries. And, therefore, there is immense scope for us to cooperate with one another."<sup>26</sup> The second reason is what Dr. Manmohan Singh had to say about Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe's proposal for a new four-way framework of strategic dialogue and cooperation, involving Japan, India, Australia and the US. Dr. Manmohan Singh said: "Our bilateral relations (between India and Japan) are rooted in similar perceptions about the evolving environment in our region..... I wish to use my forthcoming visit to Japan to gain a better understanding about Prime Minister Abe's idea of closer cooperation among major democracies in the region."<sup>27</sup>

In the Chinese perception, a joint partnership between China and Japan in leading Asia would not evoke any concerns in Asia and it will make an idea of 21<sup>st</sup> century as the Asian era much real. But a similar joint partnership of China and India would evoke the concerns of its South Asian neighbors, first of all Pakistan. There is possibility for strengthening bilateral strategic ties with India, but no joint leadership in Asia.

The policies of India, China and Japan will continue to be marked by a mix of healthy co-operation in some fields and unhealthy competition in some others and convergence of threat perceptions in some areas and divergence in certain others. They have shared concerns regarding likely threats from non-state actors such as pirates and terrorists. They also have shared views on issues such as climate warming and protection of the environment. All three have high-growth economies dependent on hydrocarbon imports to keep their economies sustained. Despite their professed intention to avoid unhealthy competition in meeting their energy requirements, such competition will be a fact of life. Myanmar's gas is an example. At first, India and China were competing for this, but, now, Japan has joined it. By reportedly offering a price higher than what has been offered by India, a Japanese company has been trying to under-cut the Indian bid.

The threat perceptions for all three countries China India and Japan differ from one another:

1. India doesn't have a concern over North Korea's military nuclear ambitions;
2. But, North Korea is a big threat for national security of Japan;
3. Japan is not concerned over Pakistan's nuclear, missile and now space relationship with China;
4. But, Pakistan & its nuclear programs and relations are the biggest threat for India and its national security;

5. China's assistance to Pakistan in the construction of the Gwadar port, to Sri Lanka in the construction of the Hambantota port and to Myanmar in the construction of the Kyaukpyu port in the Arakan does not evoke the same concerns in Japan, as they do in India.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Scholars like Onkar Marwah and Jonathan D. Pollack in 1980s mentioned, that “Thus India, China and Japan all share a potential for great power status and quite possibly near-superpower status.”<sup>28</sup> The three emerging powers - a strong Japan, a strong China and a strong India need to find ways to reconcile their interests in Asia and the world, so that they can peacefully coexist, develop and prosper. Never before in history have all three of these powers been strong at the same time.

India-Japan relations will continue to improve because the circumstances of the post-Cold War era – including, most notably, the rise of China – will reduce the geographical and mental distance between them. Economic relations between India and Japan are likely to develop as a result of current and future economic dynamics in both countries. The strategic partnership and cooperation between both will last long if it is reinforced by much stronger economic cooperation.

India and Japan have declared themselves ready to take part in the highest decision making bodies of the world. The common goal of the both countries is to join the United Nations Security Council as permanent members, which have been referred to in the joint statement of December 2005. Strategic partnerships between India and Japan will have a positive bearing on Asian security.

India and Japan have decided and put the serious steps towards strengthening their relationship in all major spheres, such as investment, defense, science and technology to civilian cooperation in space and energy security. It seems that India and Japan have rediscovered their common values and reaffirmed their proximity as ancient civilizations. The rise of China is a major factor in the development of Indo-Japanese ties. The United States was the leader among the countries, which criticized India's 1998 nuclear test, but soon it did a dramatic u-turn and by 2001 the U.S. President described India as a strategic partner of the U.S.<sup>29</sup> The U.S. attempts to build India into a major balancer in the region. Japan and India both seek to hedge against China's influence by efforts to create closer and stronger ties with other democracies in Asia and the world. The goal is to ensure that China becomes less threatening and eventually more cooperative.

At the symposium on Japan and India titled “Challenges and Prospects in

Asia-Pacific in the 21st century” held in Tokyo on March 10, 2006 sponsored by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and co-sponsored by the Confederation of Indian Industry, Mr. Yasuhisa Shiozaki, Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs noted “India with its remarkable economic development and active diplomacy is drawing attention of the world. Japan welcomes the rise of India and her positive engagement with international affairs from the perspective of peace, stability, prosperity of Asia and international prosperity.”<sup>30</sup>

Japan and India can be good partners and may have a fruitful cooperation to reinforce the trend towards multipolarity, which is important for the stability in Asia and the world. Both nations have the potential to forge enduring peace and prosperity throughout Asia. However, as Nirav Patel argues, rhetoric is insufficient to form an enduring alliance between the two nations.<sup>31</sup>

There is already recognition of the potential of China for becoming a superpower with both political and military status. Japan and India share a common strategic interest on China. From an American perspective, Green notes “In all of this it is important that Japan-India relations not be premised on the China threat and not be seen as bookends to the rise of China. It’s nether in India’s and Japan’s interests, nor in the U.S. interests. And frequently in the past efforts to jumpstart Japan-India relations, it seems to have been largely pushed by those who are doing it vis-à-vis China.”<sup>32</sup> Both Japan and India are not determined to not permit China to become a hegemonic power in East Asia. China is and would continue to be an inhibiting factor in the development of the potential of the bilateral relations between India and Japan in the security-related fields.

## Notes

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