ORF OCCASIONAL PAPER #22
AUGUST 2011

Japan and ASEAN:
Their Changing Security Relations

K.V. Kesavan

OBSERVER RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Japan and ASEAN:
Their Changing Security Relations

K.V. Kesavan

OBSERVER RESEARCH FOUNDATION
NEW DELHI

About the Author

A leading Indian scholar in the field of Japanese Studies, K.V. Kesavan is currently a distinguished fellow at Observer Research Foundation, New Delhi. He is head of the Japanese Studies programme at ORF. He was Professor of Japanese Studies at the Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for over 30 years. Author of several books on Japan, he has also written numerous research papers in Indian and foreign academic journals on Japan's foreign policy and domestic politics. He has been a Visiting Professor/Fellow at many universities in Japan and the US. In 2001, he received the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation Award for his contribution to closer understanding between India and Japan. In July 2011, the Emperor of Japan conferred on him The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon for his contributions and promotion of understanding of Japan in India.

Japan and ASEAN:
Their Changing Security Relations

Southeast Asia has been one of the key components of Japan's foreign policy in the post-Cold War period. It is one region where Japan's diplomacy has accomplished considerable success in coming to terms with the challenges posed by the legacies of the Second World War. Successive Japanese governments since 1952 have always maintained that the stability and security of ASEAN countries are closely tied to Japan's security and prosperity. For a long time, interactions between Japan and ASEAN were centered around economic matters; but changes like the collapse of the Cold War structures, the rise of non-traditional threats like terrorism, maritime piracy, climate change and energy scarcity and the advent of China as an economic and military power in Asia have compelled both Japan and ASEAN to see security in a broader and comprehensive perspective. Though Japan has still not removed all the taboos that had stood in its way of becoming a 'normal state', it has gone a fairly long way to shoulder greater regional security responsibilities than before. To be sure, the security alliance with the US is still considered as the cornerstone of Japan's foreign policy. But the nature of the alliance itself has drastically altered in the sense that Japan is making tangible contributions to the strengthening of the alliance, as has been seen in Afghanistan and Iraq. The growing military power of China and the intransigence of North Korea on its nuclear and missile programmes have totally altered the security environment of Northeast Asia and made the Japanese people see a strong rationale for expanding the role of the Self-Defence Forces (SDF.) The Constitution of Japan has still not been amended, but the desire to change

Article Nine, which prohibits an act of war by the State, is reflected in the extensive debates going on among the political parties concerned. It will, of course, take considerable time to achieve this, but till then Japan is expected to increase its security role gradually within the parameters of the Constitution.

Cold War Background

In the initial decades following the end of the Second World War, Japan's policies towards Southeast Asian countries were marked by extreme caution and circumspection in view of the deep antipathy displayed by those countries. The memories of the war were still very fresh in their minds and many of these countries which had become free were imbued with a strong sense of nationalism. As Japan remained almost isolated from the rest of Asia, the need for normalizing diplomatic relations with Southeast Asian countries was a subject of paramount importance. But it was not a simple problem since Southeast Asian countries insisted that normalization of relations was contingent on adequate and satisfactory settlement of the reparations for the sufferings they had undergone under Japanese military occupation. By the turn of 1960, Japan had completed that tortuous process and resumed normal relations with most Southeast Asian countries[1].

Taking advantage of its own dramatic economic growth, Japanese leaders thought correctly that while dealing with the countries of the region, Japan should avoid getting involved in political questions affecting the region; instead it should project economic diplomacy as an instrument to promote its ties with the region. The reparations payments provided the first opportunity for both sides to start off on a new path. The payments made

in goods and services laid the foundations of their future close economic ties. In addition, many of these agreements also carried provisions for Japan's private investments in the recipient countries. As the Japanese economy was consistently on a high trajectory during the 1960s and 1970s, Tokyo enunciated an ambitious economic assistance programme which had its main focus on Southeast Asia. During the 1970s, many of the Southeast Asian countries diluted their inward looking economic policies and opted for market-oriented strategies that opened the doors for Japanese private investment. They skillfully combined Japanese ODA with private investment to create a win-win situation. During the 1980s, the Japanese yen became very strong and it had an adverse impact on Japanese exports. The Plaza Accord signed in 1985 was a landmark in Japan's evolving relations with ASEAN[2]. The phenomenal appreciation of the value of the Japanese yen forced Japanese business to shift many of its labour intensive manufacturing bases to Southeast Asian countries where the labour cost was still quite low. This not only created a very favourable situation for Southeast Asian countries, but also brought Japan still closer into long-term economic tie-ups. In the initial years, these Japanese manufacturing companies in Southeast Asia produced goods essentially for the domestic consumption of these countries. But very soon, they became the manufacturing hubs for exports to the US, EC, and many Asian countries, including Japan. This augmented the volumes of ASEAN exports, contributing to their prosperity.

As their economic interactions accelerated, Japan could not altogether remain blind to the political and security trends that were prevailing in the region. The end of the Vietnam War (1975) created a great deal of uncertainty regarding the future strategic situation of Southeast Asia. The impending reduction in American military commitments in the region was a

matter of considerable concern for Japanese leaders who knew that their own country could not overtly assume any security role in the region, given the still lingering antipathy to Japan and also the formidable constraints imposed by the Japanese Constitution. In 1977, Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda enunciated a new vision—subsequently known as 'the Fukuda Doctrine'—which sought to articulate the way Japan wanted to project its policies in the region. Underlying the new doctrine, one discerned Japan's desire to explore the scope for an independent role in the complex region. Fukuda's doctrine laid down the following guiding principles: a) Japan would never think in terms of playing any military role in Southeast Asia; b) Japan would like to conduct heart-to-heart relations with ASEAN countries and c) While promoting closer ties with ASEAN, Japan would strive to foster good relations with Indochinese countries[3]. The last point clearly brought out Japan's anxiety concerning the need for integrating Indochina with ASEAN economically.

Given the ideological divisions that separated Indochina from ASEAN, Fukuda's vision was truly farsighted. Very soon, the invasion of Cambodia by Vietnam in December 1977 plunged the whole peninsula into a state of war that lasted until 1993. During this long period of tension and instability, Japan played an important political role in trying to work out compromises among the warring factions of Cambodia and Vietnam. It was a complex role since the Cambodian issue had serious ramifications not only for regional states, but also for outside powers including the US, the Soviet Union and China. In June 1990, Japan took the initiative to convene a peace conference of four Cambodian factions to explore a peace settlement[4]. Later, in association with Thailand, Japan made useful and persistent efforts to get the Khmer Rouge faction to accept the terms of the Paris Peace Agreement. In this process, Japan took some independent initiatives and even went to the extent of offending the US. What, indeed, gave weight to

Japan's peace efforts was its capacity to make strong commitments to the economic reconstruction of Cambodia after a peace settlement. In 1992, Japan's initiative to convene the Ministerial Conference on the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction of Cambodia was widely supported by the ASEAN countries[5].

The closing stages of the Cambodian crisis coincided with the end of the Cold War as well as the war in the Gulf (1990-92). A beneficiary of the Cold War, it was difficult for Japan to get adjusted to the rapidly changing strategic environment of the Asian continent. The US, which played the principal role in the Gulf War, expected all its allies to extend both physical and financial contributions to the promotion of its cause in the Gulf. This proved to be a tall order for Japan, which feared that the dispatch of SDF personnel to the Gulf war would give rise to virulent domestic debates and provoke adverse criticisms from neighbouring countries, including ASEAN. At the outset, Japan delayed its decision on sending defence personnel to the battle front, assuming that a monetary assistance to the tune of $13 billion would be an adequate substitute. But far from generating any appreciation from the US, this action sparked a stinging criticism that Japan was trying to shirk its responsibility by resorting to "Checkbook diplomacy'. In Japanese official circles, there was considerable bewilderment as to why their country's huge monetary contribution was not properly appreciated. They failed to understand that, in the rapidly changing post-Cold War situation, the rules of the alliance game had changed and what was now important was not monetary munificence, but tangible human participation whenever a military operation became unavoidable. Gone were the days when the US alone was able to underwrite the security of its allies; now the alliance system had become more participatory in nature.

Japan and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

Following the end of the Cold War, when there was a great deal of doubt about the continued military presence of the US in Southeast Asia, many Asian countries believed that the region needed a security forum to address several issues arising out of the rapidly changing security milieu. As early as in 1991, Japanese Foreign Minister Taro Nakayama had proposed that the ASEAN post-ministerial meetings could be used as an effective platform for addressing security issues of the region[6]. Nakayama's proposal surprised most ASEAN countries, since Japan had until then avoided taking any initiatives in the security sphere. Later, in 1994, Japan played a useful role, though from behind, in the formation of the ARF[7].

The ARF, which has more than twenty five members, started off very well in 1994 on an evolutionary path with emphasis placed on confidence-building measures to be followed by efforts to undertake preventive diplomacy and resolution of conflicts. Soon the Forum realized that it was a daunting challenge to deal with complex political and security issues that included territorial disputes, undefined EEZs, terrorism, maritime security, etc. In a concept paper issued by ARF in 1995, it was stated that though the Asia-Pacific region had witnessed dramatic economic progress, it should be borne in mind that such phases of growth were also followed by major shifts in power relations. Therefore:

a. In view of the extraordinary diversity of the region, ARF should recognize multiple approaches to peace on a consensual basis; and
b. The unresolved territorial and other issues should be carefully addressed in order to avoid confrontation among the countries concerned[8].

One can discern a few broad trends in the evolution of ARF as an institution. During 1994-97, which was a formative period, it devoted much of its time to undertaking confidence-building measures. It also adopted agreed positions on several global issues such as South China Sea, Korea, and non-proliferation. Later, it spent considerable time on issues such as maritime security and small arms. Of course, it was also preoccupied with regional questions such as Myanmar, East Timor and nuclear tests in South Asia.

But the enthusiasm that marked the creation of ARF slowly tended to weaken in the following years, when it came to be considered as being too bogged down in the very first stage of confidence-building measures to be able to move forward. In the face of public criticism that it had to quickly move to the next stage of preventive diplomacy, many countries came up with suggestions for ARF to assume more responsibilities. One suggestion was that the creation of ASEAN Defence Ministers Meeting Plus could complement the ARF's efforts.

Though the ARF formulated its concepts and principles of preventive diplomacy, there was little follow-up action on the ground. Many countries were concerned that if ARF failed to act quickly on preventive diplomacy measures, other bodies like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and the Six Parties talks on North Korea could take over its role. Japan shared their anxieties[9].

Further, as Professor Nishihara notes, ASEAN countries felt uneasy that any exercise of preventive diplomacy by the ARF, particularly in respect of territorial questions, would mean intervention in the internal affairs of those countries and hence they were extremely sensitive[10]. However, the

ARF has shown a keen interest in the sphere of maritime security and in 2008, Japan became a joint chairman of the inter-session meeting on maritime security.

The rise of China and the ASEAN region

One of the most salient aspects of the change that has occurred recently in the geo-strategic environment of Southeast Asia is the rapid rise of China as an economic and military power. During the 1950s and 1960s, China's image in the region was portrayed as an exporter of ideological revolution and a supporter of local insurgencies in some of the ASEAN countries. China's economic and political clout was so low that it did not pose any challenge to the US and Japan, which wielded great influence in the region at that time. But with the end of the Cold War and the growth of the Chinese economy, the whole scenario had changed. As has been noted earlier, the collapse of the Cold War structure was followed by a gradual reduction of US military presence in the region. Unfortunately, Japan was to face serious economic and political challenges soon. The Japanese economy was plagued by a prolonged period of recession after 1991. Further, Japan also entered a period of political instability marked by coalition politics. All this adversely affected Japan's high profile diplomacy in ASEAN that rested on its trade, investment and development assistance.

In contrast, China's continuously rising economic trajectory found unprecedented opportunities for advancing its interests in the region. Even during the currency crisis of 1997-98, despite the prominent role played by Japan in terms of extending $30 billion to tide over the situation, it was Beijing that took a lead over Tokyo. China's decision not to devalue its currency and to extend substantial volume of aid particularly to Thailand

and Indonesia created a fund of goodwill among ASEAN countries[11]. Even then, Japan's overall assistance to the region was far more than what China actually offered. But what really disappointed ASEAN was Japan's abject failure to push through its cherished proposal to establish an Asian Monetary Fund (AMF). In September 1997, Japan and ASEAN had detailed talks on the proposal to set up an Asian IMF for the purpose of supplementing the IMF. This proposal, considered widely as reflecting the readiness of Japan to take an initiative in the regional affairs, had to be abandoned due to strong resistance from the US, which insisted on the continuance of the IMF centered financial order. China also opposed the proposal, as it feared that it would enhance the Japanese profile in the region[12]. However, despite sharp differences with the US, Japan finally did make a new proposal called the New Miyazawa Initiative that pledged a package of $30 billion for the affected countries.

This initiative clearly demonstrated Japan's eagerness to seek a niche for itself outside the influence of the US. Simultaneously, Japan was also actively promoting a new institutional forum that would facilitate greater coordination with China and South Korea and link it up with ASEAN countries. The first ASEAN+3, which materialized in 1997, soon became an important mechanism that opened a new avenue for addressing regional issues. In 2000, Japan also succeeded in initiating an agreement for swapping currencies among the ASEAN+3 countries known as the 'Chiang Mai Initiative'[13].

China did not lag behind Japan, but intensified its efforts to project itself as a benign country to its neighbours and even adopted what is described as "smile diplomacy" towards ASEAN. One rationale for this attitude should be seen in its anxiety to consolidate its own economic development at

home. Beijing believed that prevalence of stable and peaceful conditions in and around its neighbourhood was closely related to Chinese domestic tranquility[14]. Secondly, taking advantage of Japan's economic recession that had considerably reduced its diplomatic initiatives, Beijing thought that it could strike out new policies to woo ASEAN countries and enhance its regional strategic interests. A string of significant events that soon followed testify to this. In November 2001, China and ASEAN made an announcement about their desire to conclude a Free Trade Agreement (FTA). In 2002, China signed a declaration with ASEAN countries on a code of conduct in the South China Sea area.

The China-ASEAN Joint Declaration of 2002 in the field of non-traditional security issues also enhanced the cooperation in dealing with transnational crimes. In the same year, both signed a Framework Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and as a result, the volume of trade between the two sides tended to grow rapidly. In 2003, China was the first Dialogue Partner to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) with ASEAN. In October that year, China and ASEAN also signed a joint declaration on a strategic partnership that encouraged greater cooperation and consultation on a variety of subjects including non-traditional security.

The purpose of establishing the strategic partnership, according to the Declaration, is to foster good-neighbourliness and friendship and strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation by deepening China-ASEAN cooperative relations in a comprehensive manner in the 21st century. It called the partnership "non-aligned, non-military and non-exclusive and does not affect participants from developing friendship and cooperation with others[15]." As regards the rationale for the strategic partnership, it was

stated that in view of the complex and profound changes that take place in the present day world, the strengthening of cooperation between the two sides would serve their immediate and long-term interests and would be conducive to peace and prosperity in the region. In November 2004, they drew up an elaborate plan of action to implement the joint declaration on their strategic partnership for peace and prosperity. In 2006, both China and ASEAN convened a commemorative summit which stressed the need to strengthen their partnership in security and political spheres. Their joint statement emphasized the importance of defence exchanges, cooperation in maritime security and disaster management. China has also developed bilateral defence cooperation with countries like Vietnam, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore.

Japan's Response

The unprecedented surge in China's economic and political/security profile in the region sent jitters through the Japanese official establishment, which felt that the time had come for Tokyo to take certain urgent measures to ensure that Japan's carefully cultivated interests in the region were not endangered. During Prime Minister Koizumi's tenure, Sino-Japanese relations were badly strained due mainly to his regular visits to the controversial Yasukuni Shrine. Strongly protesting against these visits, China suspended many high level official meetings including summit meetings between the Japanese Prime Minister and the Chinese President.

Further, Koizumi's Asian policy, which was perceived to be overemphasizing the importance of Japan's alliance with the US caused considerable wariness in the minds of many ASEAN countries. Fearing that if these conditions were allowed to persist, Southeast Asia would

altogether slip out of Japan's influence, a series of initiatives were taken by Koizumi with a view to strengthening Japanese position in the region.

In July 2002, Koizumi proposed a comprehensive economic partnership with ASEAN. In December 2003, he convened, rather hurriedly, the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in Tokyo. For the first time, such a conference was held outside the ASEAN region. The Conference released a document called the 'Tokyo Declaration' which forms a landmark in the post-Cold War Japan-ASEAN relations in the sense that it has set a new roadmap for both sides to pursue. It underscores the importance of formulating common strategies for constructing comprehensive economic partnerships, strengthening of political and security cooperation, promoting exchanges of people and human resource development and working towards an East Asian community and cooperation in addressing global issues[16].

Another significant development at the Tokyo Summit related to Japan's announcement that it was inclined to sign the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation (TAC) with ASEAN though its actual accession to the TAC came in July 2004. It was a major reversal of its attitude towards the TAC. One compelling reason for this change of attitude was that Japan knew that ASEAN was very keen that all members of the EAS were signatories to the TAC. The fact that China had already signed the Treaty naturally weighed quite heavily with Japan.

Japan had delayed its accession to the TAC because of its apprehension that a definite commitment to the TAC could curtail its diplomacy in the sensitive areas of human rights violations and create misunderstanding in its alliance relations with the US. Nevertheless, by the time of the Tokyo

Summit, Japan had realized that since ASEAN had made accession to the TAC a condition precedent to the membership of the EAS, it could no longer delay its decision on the TAC.

It is important to consider the proactive role that Japan played in the creation of the EAS. Both China and Japan supported the EAS as a necessary step to the creation of a larger community, but their approaches markedly differed. While China wanted the EAS to be limited only to the ASEAN +3 countries, Japan advocated a larger body that also included Australia, New Zealand and India. Japan believed that the EAS, if composed only of ASEAN +3 countries, could be dominated by China.

But China had strong reservations about the inclusion of the three countries and even lobbied quite hard to see that India was kept out of the summit process. Finally, Japan, Singapore and Indonesia succeeded in giving the EAS a broader geographical definition that kept the doors open for the entry of more outsiders like the US and Russia at a later stage.

The Kuala Lumpur Declaration issued by the participants in 2005 is a historic document, as it clearly laid down the future shape of the EAS as follows: The EAS would be an open, inclusive and transparent and outward-looking forum. ASEAN would be the driving force working in partnership with other participants. The EAS would be hosted and chaired by an ASEAN member country only[17].

At the fifth EAS summit, both the US and Russia attended and they will become full members at the next summit meeting to be held in Bali in 2011. The expansion of the EAS beyond the ASEAN +3 has been a matter for

considerable relief for Japan, as it would reduce the possibilities of China playing a dominant role.

What tangible measures has Japan taken to contribute to the stability and security of the ASEAN region? As has been noted, ever since the Fukuda Doctrine, Japan has always believed that despite their political and economic divergences, a strong and well-knit ASEAN could be an asset to regional stability and security. Japanese economic assistance (ODA), its comprehensive economic partnership agreement with ASEAN (2008), in addition to free trade agreements with individual ASEAN countries have greatly strengthened their mutual interdependence. Japan's key role in the economic reconstruction of East Timor accompanied by its peace-keeping operations under the aegis of the UN were very well appreciated by the ASEAN countries as a clear evidence of its earnestness in carrying out its regional responsibilities[18].

Though Japan's economic and political links with Myanmar have been 'minimal' in the post-Cold War years, Tokyo has been rather anxious to see that Yangon was not completely cut off from the rest of the region. It knew that China had already taken advantage of Myanmar's isolation in terms of not only promoting trade and investment interests, but also building strong strategic links with that country. One objective of Japan's Myanmar policy has been to make that country a strong and stable element within the ASEAN group. Despite its broad support to the American policy of enforcing sanctions against Yangon, Japan has considered it wise to maintain 'limited engagement' with both the ruling military junta and the pro-democracy elements. Tokyo suspended economic cooperation with Myanmar in principle following the military coup in 1988. Recognizing the release of Aung San Suu Kyi in July 1995, Tokyo reviewed its aid policy and

decided to consider implementing the suspended projects that would directly benefit the basic human needs of the people. But as the democratization process was not making any progress, in 1996 Japan refused to provide any grant aid or loans for new projects. Official contacts with the Myanmar government have been maintained sporadically through ministerial meetings at multilateral forums. For instance, in July 1996, Japan's Foreign Minister Ikeda Yukihiko met his Myanmar counterpart in Jakarta and urged his Government to strive to achieve an early transition to a civilian government[19]. Japan's official position on Myanmar was succinctly conveyed to ASEAN countries by Japanese Prime Minister Hashimoto Ryutaro at the time of Myanmar's admission to ASEAN in January 1997:

"Japan does not feel international isolation is the optimal way for the improvement of domestic situation in Myanmar. Rather, Japan thinks it important to give Myanmar incentives to behave in line with international norms by drawing it out as a member of the international community. From that point of view, Japan appreciates ASEAN's recent agreement to grant official membership to Myanmar sometime in the future. On the other hand, Japan also thinks that ASEAN membership should not provide a smokescreen for oppression in Myanmar. Accordingly, Japan hopes that ASEAN will handle the membership issue in such a manner as to contribute to the improvement of the domestic situation in Myanmar[20]."

In November 2003, Prime Minister Koizumi met Senior General Than Swe in Vientiane on the occasion of the ASEAN+3 conference. They met again in April 2005 in Jakarta on the occasion of ASI-Africa Conference. In November 2007 Japanese Prime Minister Fukuda Yasuo met his Myanmar counterpart Thein Sein on the sidelines of the East Asia Summit meeting held in Singapore. The Japanese Government also maintained contacts

with the opposition political parties of Myanmar. Japan's ambassador based in Yangon frequently met Suu Kyi. In addition, the Japanese Government acted as a conduit for the UN Special Representative Ibrahim Gambari and tried hard to facilitate his visit to Myanmar.

In recent years, Japan has been convening the meetings of Foreign Ministers of the Mekong region countries including Thailand, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia. There is a recognition that the Mekong region has become more interdependent and risen as a potential market. These countries have recognized the role of Japan in regional development. Having held three regular annual meetings, they have chalked out various plans for the dynamic growth of the region in several spheres[21]. It is relevant in this context to note that both Japan and China have also held bilateral consultative dialogue on the development of the Mekong region.

Japan's contributions in the sphere of non-traditional security in Southeast Asia have been steadily growing in recent years. There is an active institutional dialogue mechanism between Japan and ASEAN for countering terrorism. This dialogue was started in 2005 and since then it has been held every year. The Dialogue is intended as a forum for redefining the importance of international cooperation in countering terrorism as well as for holding free and frank exchanges of views on the issue[22]. Japan has also been very much involved in poverty alleviation activities in the region. But it is in the sphere of maritime security that Japan and ASEAN have tremendous potential for cooperation as they share common interests and concerns. The Japanese economy critically depends on the safety of the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean, especially the Malacca Strait. Tokyo's particular attention on the Strait has led to closer cooperation with countries like Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and Thailand. The growth in the activities

of the pirates in and around the Strait has led to expanded Japanese assistance in strengthening the capacities of the littoral countries. Japanese coast guard vessels have patrolled Southeast Asian seas and conducted joint exercises with their counterparts in Southeast Asia. In March 2000, Japan organized a preparatory conference on anti-piracy, which was attended by fourteen countries including several from Southeast Asia. It considered in depth the kind of threats faced by each country and the steps to be taken to tackle the problem. This was followed by an international conference in Tokyo in April, 2000. The appeal made by the conference reiterated the participants' determination to cooperate, devise and implement all possible measures to combat piracy and armed robbery against ships. In pursuance of this, Japanese Coast Guards vessels have patrolled Southeast Asian seas and conducted joint exercises with their counterparts in Southeast Asia.

The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has extended considerable funds to train maritime authorities in Southeast Asia. But it has become imperative for other industrializing countries of East Asia to show their concern, since their dependence on the sea lanes has increased. In 2004 Japan made a significant contribution to maritime security by concluding the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships (ReCAPP) and setting up the ReCAPP Information Sharing Center in 2006. Japan's contributions in the maritime security sphere have been so far limited to civilian cooperation and its maritime self-defense forces have been used only for disaster relief. Direct Japanese naval involvement in the region continues to remain a sensitive issue.

Conclusion

During the Cold War period, Japan's security policy in the Southeast Asian region was circumscribed by its alliance with the US and the legacies of the Second World War. Japan therefore found it expedient to opt for a less controversial economic diplomacy to forge closer links with the countries of the region. After the end of the Cold War, there emerged a new strategic architecture in which the supremacy of the US was no longer uncontested. In order to get adjusted to the emerging strategic order, Japan had to assume certain new responsibilities within the parameters of its Constitution. The revision of the National Defence Policy Outline in 1994 was one indication of this process and it was followed by several other changes, such as International peace-keeping law, the redefinition of the US-Japan security alliance in 1996, formulation of the Defence guidelines, Antiterrorism Law and the formulation of the National Defence guidelines in 2004. But as China was making big strides in its relations with ASEAN after 2000, Japan had to speedily undertake several measures to safeguard its own position in the region, carefully nurtured over decades. Koizumi's plan to widen the membership of the East Asian Summit to include India, Australia and Ne Zealand and later the US and Russia was to prevent China from trying to dominate the Summit. Though anti-Japanese sentiments in the region have greatly lessened, Japan is still not ready or willing to play a strident security role. This could be explained by the absence of a national consensus within Japan itself. But Japan's significant contribution to the region has been seen more in the non-traditional security areas such as counter-terrorism, maritime security, disaster relief, alleviation of poverty and eradication of diseases and epidemics.

Ends Note:

1 See K.V. Kesavan, Japan's Relations with Southeast Asia1952-60 (Bombay,1972)

2. "What was the Plaza Accord, and what does it have to do with pressures on China to revalue…" Business Insider, 26 September 2010, Online.

3. See Sueo Sudo, Evolution of ASEAN-Japan Relations (Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Singapore, 2005) pp12-13

4. Yasuhiro Takeda, "The Cambodian Peace Conference in Tokyo: An Historic Turning Point Towards Settling the Conflict?"(IIGP Research Report, July 1990)

5. K.V. Kesavan, Japan's Role in the Cambodian Peace Settlement (1991-93), (ORF, New Delhi,2011), p 17

6. See Paul Midford, "Japan's leadership role in East Asia security multilateralism:The Nakayama proposal and the logic of reassurance" in The Pacific Review, vol 13, no3, 2000, pp367-97. Also Yukiko Satoh, " Emerging trends in the Asia-Pacific security: The role of Japan", The Pacific Review, vol8,no2,1995, pp272-75

7. See Asian Security1993-94 (Tokyo,1993)

8. "The ASEAN Regional Forum: A Concept Paper", www.aseansec.org/3635.htm

9. East Asian Strategic Review 2010 (The National Institute for Defense Studies, (Japan) p158

10. See Nishihara Masashi, "Japan's Political and Security Relations with ASEAN" in ASEAN-Japan Cooperation: A foundation for East Asian Community"(edited Japan Center for International Exchange, Tokyo) 2003, pp 154-67

11. See Tomotaka Shoji, "Pursuing a Multi-dimensional Relationship: Rising China and Japan's Southeast Asia Policy"in Jun Tsnekawa (ed) The Rise of China: Responses from Southeast Asia and Japan (The National Institute for Defense Studies, Japan, 2009) p167

12. Ibid

13. Ibid 169

14. Masuda Masayuki, "China's Search for a new Foreign Policy Frontier: Concept and Practice of "harmonious world" in Masafumi Iida (ed) China's Shift: Global Strategy of the Rising Power (NIIDS, 2009), pp 57-79

15. See Joint Declaration of the ASEAN and the People's Republic of China on a Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity9 Official website of the ASEAN.) www.asean.org/15265.htm
16. www.aseansec.org/1550.htm
17. See K.V. Kesavanin "The Role of Regional Institutions in India's Look East Policy" in K.V. Kesavan and Daljit Singh (ed) South and Southeast Asia: Responding to Changing and Geo-Political and Security Challenges (New Delhi,2010), p114
18. See Diplomatic Blue Book 2001(Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, 2001) pp 25-26
19. See Japan's Position Regarding the Situation in Myanmar, March 1997, p2 (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan) http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/myanmar/myanmar.html
20. Ibid
21. Chair's statement on Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers meeting, 16 January,2008 http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/mekong.meet0801.hml
22. http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/event/2010/6/0621_01.html

ORF PUBLICATIONS:

- South and Southeast Asia:Responding to Changing Geo-Political and Security Challenges Edited by K.V. Kesavan and Daljit Singh ORF-Knowledge World
- India's Nuclear Diplomacy after Pokhran II
  Ajai. K. Rai, ORF- Pearson-Longman
- The Future of Conflict and Security in India's Emerging Political Environment
  Neil Padukone, ORF-Knowledge World
- Revisiting the Sino-Indian-border dispute—Prospects for Resolution
  Mohan Guruswamy, Zorawar Daulet Singh, ORF-Viva
- Occasional Paper: India-Myanmar Relations (1998-2008): A Decade of Redefining Bilateral ties, K. Yhome
- ORF Seminar Series, Implementation of Right to Information Act: Issues and Challenges
  Wajahat Habibullah
- India and China: The Next Decade
  Edited by S. D. Muni and Suranjan Das, ORF-Rupa
- Managed Chaos, The Fragility of the Chinese Miracle
  Prem Shankar Jha, ORF-Sage
- The New Asian Power Dynamic, edited by Maharajakrishna Rasgotra; (ORF-Sage 2007)
- Democracy in Muslim Societies : The Asian Experience (ORF Studies in Contemporary Muslim Societies-IV), edited by Zoya Hasan (ORF-Sage 2007)
- India and Central Asia : Potential for Regional Co-operation, by Ajish P. Joy (ORF-Samskriti 2007)
- The Naxal Challenge: Causes, Linkages and Policy Options, edited by P.V. Ramana (ORF-Pearson Longman 2007)
- Maritime Counter-Terrorism A Pan-Asian Perspective, Edited by Swati Parashar (ORF-Pearson Longman 2007)

- Pakistan: Four Scenarios, by Wilson John (ORF-Pentagon Press 2007)
- ORF Policy Brief - Terrorism and Human rights, Wilson John and P.V. Ramana (2007)
- A Nation in Transition:Understanding the Indian Economy, by Jayshree Sengupta; (ORF-Academic Foundation 2007)
- The Politics of Power Sector Reform in India, by Niranjan Sahoo; (ORF-Pentagon Press 2007)
- Extremism and Opposition Movements on the Arabian Peninsula, by Joseph A. Kechichian (ORF 2006)

Observer Research Foundation is a public policy think-tank that aims to influence formulation of policies for building a strong and prosperous India. ORF pursues these goals by providing informed and productive inputs, in-depth research and stimulating discussions. The Foundation is supported in its mission by a cross-section of India's leading public figures, academics and business leaders.

₹ 195/

Observer Research Foundation
20, Rouse Avenue, New Delhi-110 002
Email: orf@orfonline.org
Phone: +91-11-43520020 Fax: +91-11-43520003
www.orfonline.org