CHAPTER- 6
EROSION OF PACIFISM IN EAST ASIA: IMPLICATIONS ON REGIONAL SECURITY

Introduction:
The Constitutional amendment process in Japan and the ongoing defense modernizations have been viewed as an erosion of Japanese peace Constitution and are causing serious concerns among East Asian nations. It is argued that the Chinese military might and North Korea’s nuclear and missile tests are core driving forces behind the rise of militarism in Japan and has resulted in strengthened Japan-US military cooperation. However the counterargument that the US and Japan are trying to disseminate the idea of a “threat” from China’s economic rise and military build up can not be ignored. The fact that- to maintain and further strength the Cold War security arrangements even though the Cold war is over- gives basis to this argument.

There exists trust deficit among the East Asian nations mainly among China, Japan, South and North Korea. Japan’s colonial history and disputes on territories and resources are frequently emerging in their diplomatic circles and have marred their normal diplomatic relations. The East Asian countries are expediting their efforts to form different security alliances to minimize and counterbalance each others influence in the region.

Japan which claims that it is facing new threats and challenges to its security from the rise of China and emergence of a nuclearized North Korea advocates the need to revise its Constitution, overhauling of its Self defense Force and strengthening of its defense with the help of its ally the US to meet these new realities.

In this context, this chapter discusses the issues related to Japan’s defence policy in relation with country’s pacifist Constitution and aims at understanding concerns and responses from the neighbouring countries and its various possible implications on East Asian regional security situation.
Rising Militarism in East Asia:
The East Asian region—either geographically or in terms of extensive involvement—contains the four major power of the contemporary world: the US, China, Japan and Russia. It is also the locus of current source of major tension namely North Korea and Taiwan (Scalapino 2004). To maintain their supremacy in the region, the world powers have entered into strategic alliances and have gone in for arm race on the name of maintaining "credible deterrence". This has resulted in the rise of militarism and subsequently led to erosion of pacifism in the region.

Over the years China has been increasing its defense expenditure, test-fired anti-satellite missile, has modernized its military and enacted anti-secession law, which poses threat to peace and stability of Taiwan Straits in particular and East Asia in general. North Korea has deployed ballistic missiles and has conducted underground nuclear tests in 2006 and 2009, which is the main factor of instability for the Asia-Pacific region.

On the other hand, Japan is also trying to establish itself as "normal country" and is taking measures for revising its pacifist constitution and modernizing its defense capacity so that it can play a greater security role at the regional as well as international level. Therefore it is necessary to look into developments in this region country wise.

China: The rise of an economic giant

China’s massive economic strength together with its rising military power causes apprehensions among the Asian countries as well as international community. When it conducted an experiment by destroying its own satellite with anti-satellite missile, it caused severe concern among the major military powers as it was seen as an ambitious military program and using space for weaponisation. Prior to this China has launched series of satellites under its Aerospace program. Countries in the region are apprehensive that China may use its aerospace technology for military purposes such as information gathering, communication and navigation.

169
China’s National defense white paper 2006 described its ongoing manned space flights and Lunar Probe Project as “being carried out to spur the leapfrogging development of high tech enterprises combining military and civilian needs and to bring out overall improvements in defense related science and technology.”


Seen in this context China’s non-military and military section of the aerospace program seems closely linked.

As part of String of Pearls strategy China is developing sea port in different parts of world in a bid to strengthen its sea power, which has alarmed major maritime powers such as Japan, the US and Australia. The rise of Chinese sea power can be witnessed by the fact that the Chinese engineers are constructing Gwadar military port in South West Pakistan. Similarly China is building container port facility in Chittagong in Bangladesh for its naval and merchants’ fleets as well as more naval and electronic intelligence-gathering facilities on islands owned by Myanmar in the Bay of Bengal.(The Japan Times, September 14, 2005) Yet another port is coming up in Sri Lanka with the help of China. With the developments of these ports, China seeks not only to secure its energy supplies but also to achieve broader security goals.

The long pending issue of Taiwan, to which China claims its “breakaway province” and claims territorial right over it, which thus becomes one of the major sources of tension in the region. The advent of devout nationalist- Chen Shui-bian- on Taiwan’s political scene and his pronouncement for revising Taiwan’s Constitution was seen in Beijing as a covert way of pursuing independence. Tensions between the two sides during Chen’s tenure mounted over the determination of his governing Democratic Progressive Party to press ahead with a public referendum on the island’s bid to enter the United Nations under the name of Taiwan rather than its official title -the Republic of China. Amid this escalating tension during Chen’s regime, Taiwan developed a long-range, land-attack cruise missile with sufficient range to strike targets as far away as Shanghai, which was seen as the country’s determination to gear up its defense against China.
The problem of the lingering issue aggravated further when China passed a new anti-secession law in March 2005. The law authorizes the use of “non-peaceful” means against Taiwan if it is pushed for formal statehood (http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/world/asia-pacific/4381737.stm).

At the backdrop of these events, Pentagon report released in July 2005 alleged that China is carrying out a military build up and modernization beyond its interest and termed this a step towards seizing Taiwan. The report says this puts regional military balance “at risk” and China could become a long-term “credible” threat to Japan and other country in the region. (The Japan Times, September 14, 2005.) The June 2006 Pentagon report reiterated the same.

Chinese Defense spending is yet another concern for security planners of the region. They have been calling on Beijing to be more transparent about its military spending, its plans and its views of the world. China’s officially declared defense budget is 25.6 billion dollars, while the security experts believe that it could be far more than that.

However, the new administration in Taiwan under Ma’s leadership has taken various decisions by opening up aviation links and direct talks with Beijing, which is viewed by analysts as thaw in cross straits relations. Ma’s administration has requested the Chinese authorities to withdraw its anti-cession law which talks of a military action against Taiwan, but Beijing is still to respond to this request. This means till China keeps military option open, tension is not going to be eased in their relations.

**North Korea: A ‘failed state’ with Nuclear Ambition**

The diplomatically secluded North Korea with a Communist dictatorship regime became subject of international concern, when question about its nuclear weapon development program came to the fore. Following its withdrawal form Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and evacuation of International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA)
inspectors from its Yongbyon nuclear enrichment installation in 2003, it embarked on nuclear weapon development and conducted a nuclear test in 2006.

Following its nuclear test in 2006 hectic parleys began to pursue it for abandoning its nuclear program. Following successive rounds of six party talks, which other than the two Koreas involve the US, Russia, China and Japan, North finally agreed to dismantle its nuclear weapon program in return of security guarantees and energy and economic deals. In yet another success to six way talks, North Korea dismantled Yongbyong nuclear installation’s cooling tower, the most visible structure of its nuclearisation program.

However, it was not enough given its inconsistent stand and behaviour and the world community’s apprehension about its motives and moves came true when it launched an experimental communication satellite into space using the launch vehicle Unha-2. The world community viewed the launching of missile in the garb of communication satellite and termed a violation of UN resolution 1718, which forbade the DPRK not to go for any Inter Continental Ballistic Missile test.

Security experts suspected that Unha-2 is a redesigned version of Taepedong -2 long range missile, which has a range of 6,000 kilometers and can reach parts of the US.

Following the ‘satellite launch’ the UN passed another statement condemning the hermit nation, which in retaliation sent back IAEA inspectors from the country and conducted yet another nuclear test on May 25, 2009. Not only that, it test-fired series of short and medium range missile after the nuclear test. The recent test-firing have caused serious security concerns in South Korea and neighouring Japan. The security analysts argue that the recent development would push both the neighbours to go for a nuclear option to achieve a credible deterrence against the reclusive North. Therefore till, North Korea fully gives up its military ambitions; it would remain a cause of concern for the international community and would be considered a destabilizing factor for the region.
Security analysts have argued that Pyongyong's ultimate goal is to possess nuclear weapon to maintain its existing regime. While yet another group of security experts believe that the North Korea by strengthening its military might intends to use its capability to directly engage with the US in bilateral talks and eventually sign a non-aggression treaty. And till it achieves this goal, it seems it would continue on militarizing and that worries Japan and grows its security concerns.

**Japan: An Emerging Normal Military Power Having US Bases on its Archipelago**

Japan a leading member of Asia-Pacific is not only modernizing its military force, it has begun an expansion of its strategic commitment beyond its border and has deployed vessels in Indian Ocean and has sent two of its vessels for an anti-piracy mission in Gulf of Aden off Somalia. This change has been witnessed in Japan's security and defense policy following the Gulf war of 1990. Owing to pressure from its long held ally -the US and also to find its own rightful place in the global scenario, it has accepted non-combatant role in Iraq, East Timor, Mozambique, Cambodia and elsewhere.

At the home front, Tokyo and Washington have recently launched a series of defense plans which both governments claim that these programs under US-Japan Security arrangements "are indispensable not only to maintaining to the peace and security of Japan but also the entire Asia-pacific region." *(Defense of Japan 2008:212).

Both the countries have been engaged in consultation on the future Us-Japan alliance and agreed in May 2006 on Force posture realignment. Japan's defense white paper 2008 explains the development as follows:

"As part of its global military posture realignment effort, the US is conducting some review to strengthen its force restructures in the Pacific. Among these reviews are strengthening Marine Corps crisis response capabilities and redistributing those capabilities to provide greater flexibility to respond with appropriate capabilities according to the nature and location of particular situation." *(Defense of Japan 2008:225)
The US and Japan have identified a set of realignment measures to which they claim is an effort to ease the burden of local community in Okinawa (Defense of Japan 2008: 225) but in actuality the realignment of US forces on Japanese archipelago from Hokkaido to Okinawa (North to South) provides both the US and Japanese forces an strategic advantage over the military capabilities of other countries in the region.

In connection with the realignment of US forces in Japan, both the countries have recently agreed to expand military cooperation which is aimed at adapting the bilateral alliance to better deal with changes in the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region. The agreement called for enhancing defense cooperation concerning missile defense, joint use of bases, and increased SDF exercises on Guam, Hawaii and the US mainland.

Japan’s Defense white paper 2008 cites the reason as follows:

“In conjunction with the realignment of US Marine Corps capabilities in Asia-pacific region, the personnel of the III Marine Expedition Force (III MEF) will be relocated to Guam and remaining marine units in Okinawa will be realigned. Due to this realignment in Okinawa, it is planned that approximately 8,000 III MEF personnel and their approximately 9,000 dependents will relocate from Okinawa to Guam by 2014 in a manner that maintains unit integrity”. *(Defense of Japan 2008:232).

The relocation of 8,000 strong marine will certainly help Japan strengthen its naval power with the help of its ally the US. To accelerate the realignment plan the Japanese Diet has also passed the bill which would be effective for 10 years and would be implemented by 2017. It would also create a financial burden on Japan as it is required to share 730 billion yen for Guam relocation and nearly three trillion yen for the entire realignment plan. (The Asahi Shimbun, May 23, 2007).

But the most ambitious US’s realignment plan is the shifting of US Army’s 1st Corps command headquarters from Washington to Camp Zama in Kanagawa Prefecture which would leave wider implication on the East Asian security. The Japan’s Defense
whitepaper justifies this realignment saying that “this transformation is based on the global realignment of USARJ (US Army in Japan) as part of the overall transformation of US forces”. Further it claims that the transformed USARJ headquarter headquarters in Japan will continue to hold the same core mission in defending Japan and maintaining the peace and security of the Far East.” *(Defense of Japan 2008: 233)

In a move to strengthen Air defense System, both the countries plan to establish a joint air defense Command center at the US Air Force’s Yokota base in western Tokyo by fiscal 2010. Creation of Command system is aimed at strengthening ability to detect and deal with enemy missile launches (The Japan Times, September 26, 2005). Japan’s defence white paper in this regard claims that the “bilateral Joint operation Coordination Centre (BJOCC) is to be established and it is planned to complete construction/installation of facilities and infrastructure and to commence operation at the BJOCC by Japan in Fiscal year 2010” *(Defense of Japan, 2008:233). It states further that this “arrangement will enhance coordination between headquarters of the SDF and the US forces including the sharing of information concerning air defence and BMD”.

In yet another effort to strengthen US-Japan defense, both the countries embarked on a joint missile defense system in 1999, following North Korean missile tests. After seven years of their efforts, in 2006 the US forces deployed a new X-band radar system for missile defense in Japan, which include installation of Patriot PAC-3 and SM-3 missiles. The security analysts estimate that this ambitious program will cost Japan $ 1.2 billion (The Japan Times, December 16, 2005). Japan’s Defense Whitepaper has following argument for this arrangement:

“In June 2006 the new US forward Based X-band Transportable (FBX-T) Radar System (AN/TPY-2; hereafter referred to as the “X-Band Radar Systems” with the sophisticated capability to search and track ballistic missile was deployed to ASDF Shariki Air Station (in Aomori Prefecture) and operations commenced.” *(Defence of Japan, 2008: 236).
Japan's deployment of Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system with PAC-3 capabilities has raised an eye brow not only in strategic planners in China but also in Russia. Japan though calls it that these capabilities would contribute to "improvement of country's defense against missile attacks, the maintenance of deterrence of USPJ and safety of Japanese citizens" (Defense of Japan, 2008: 236), while Russia has termed that the joint missile defense program is aimed at gaining military superiority in the region.

Japan has announced to deploy F15 fighter jets in for the first time in Okinawa which it says is a "measure aimed at airspace violations" but is seen as an apparent move by Tokyo to enhance air defense against China", (International Herald Tribune, 9 October 2007.)

In yet another development Japanese Diet enacted Japan's first law in May 2008 on the use of space, thereby changing the decades old principle of "non-military use" and paved the way for the development of defence equipments including the full scale spy satellites. The law stipulated that the use and development of space be carried out in ways that contributed to Japan's security, thereby relaxing the non-military principle based on a 1969 Diet resolution. This law changed Japan's policy on the use of space to "non-aggression" from non-military and allowed the government to station equipment in space compatible with a defence-oriented policy. Such equipment includes early warning satellites that can detect signs of a ballistic missile launch and spy satellite that can view objects as small as 15 centimeters. It may be recalled that Japan has launched four intelligence-gathering satellites since 2003 after a North Korean ballistic missile flew over Japan in 1998. (The Japan Times, May 22, 2008)

The Japanese Defense Agency (predecessor of Ministry of Defense) had been maintaining that the ongoing upgrade is designed to cope with North Korean missile, "given the degree of the threat of ballistic missile attack" and to counter Chinese threat.

Japan has upgraded its Defense Agency into a Ministry which it claims was needed because "the security environment surrounding Japan has undergone significantly
changes” since the foundation of Agency 52 years ago. It adds further that the Defense Agency has been upgraded into Ministry so that “the two organizational entities (Defense Agency and the SDF) could promptly respond to variety of problems and accurately but flexibly meet the requests and expectations of the public” adding that “it marks a fresh start for Japan toward the achievement of new policy goals.” (Defense of Japan: 2007) However, it has drawn strong criticism from Japan’s erstwhile colonies which are being discussed later in this chapter.

Over the years, Japan’s defense White papers have been claiming that “in the light of issues concerning North Korea armed spy vessels and submerged navigation within Japan’s territory by Chinese nuclear submarine” Japan is maintaining “fighter aircrafts units to respond instantly and adequately to the violations of territorial airspace”. But the Chinese side claims that Japan’s sense of crisis is purely imaginary and fully demonstrated by the country’s policies towards China and other neighbouring nations. The Chinese side also believes that China's sustained growth and its increasing international influence has made Japan extremely nervous that its status in East Asia is being challenged. Therefore Japan is trying to disseminate the idea of a “threat” from China’s military build up. (China Daily (Beijing), November 4, 2005.)

Russia: The Resurgent Military and Economic Power

For East Asian nations Russia remains a strategic power with extensive nuclear reserve as well as sizeable conventional force including modern air and naval equipments. Russian military strength remains formidable in the region and it still intends to re-establish itself as an influential player in the region.

With a resurging economy, Russia has adopted more assertive diplomacy under the then President Putin and his successor Medvedev. Recent examples of Russia’s vociferous opposition to the US includes, America’s move to install anti-ballistic missile system in Estonia and Check republic. Its test-firing of a long range Intercontinental Ballistic Missile is seen as a show of strength in response to the US efforts. To minimize US
influence in the region, Moscow has taken efforts to strengthen its relations with China entering into Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). It is because of a resurgent Russia's presence in SCO, the organization is being seen as an “oriental NATO” or a potential organization to emerge as a countervailing force to NATO.

With a view to regain its influence in Eurasia, Russia plans to play leading role in the military exercise to be held on its territory in 2007 and jointly with the member countries of the collective security Treaty Organization (CSTO) of the CIS and those with the SCO. Its arms export has further swelled especially to the developing countries. Presently it is negotiating with China to export SU-33 carrier based fighters. Increased Russian exports are arousing concerns about the negative impact they may have on the international military balance and regional security. (East Asian Strategic Review 2007:12)

With its continuous efforts to revive stalled six party talks, and pursuance to North Korea for abandon its nuclear program, Russia has proved that it can play a vital role in the affairs of the East Asian region. Invitation to Russian President to address the first East Asian Summit as a guest and tactfully excluding the US indicate that at least core ASEAN members still recognize Russia as an influential power in the region.

Russia is not only closely watching the developments in the region but has also been registering its opposition through its remarks. It has criticized Japan for establishing missile defense system and forging alliance with the US and Australia, which it says is aimed at securing military superiority.

Territorial Disputes: Apple of discord in the region
Japan’s unresolved territorial disputes with its neighbors strains its normal relations with these countries. Japan and China are at loggerheads over the sovereignty of Senkaku islands while disputes with Russia linger on for the last 60 years over its claim on Northern Territories known as Kurile Islands. With South Korea it has disputes on Takeshima (doktok) island.
The issue of control over the potential oil reserves of the Senkaku (Daiyutai) over which, China, Japan and Taiwan claim their sovereignty, has made these islands a possible flashpoint between China and Japan. The existing territorial tensions over the issue of sovereignty of these islands aggravated in the 1990s, when China incorporated the islands as its territories. In February 1992, the China passed the “Laws of Territorial Waters and Contiguous Zone” which incorporated Diayotai Islands along with Parcels and Spartly’s Islands. Article 8 of this law stated that the Chinese Navy “can order the eviction of foreign naval vessels operating in these waters” (Kondapalli, 2005). In yet another development, UN Convention on the Law of Sea came into being on Nov.16, 1994. Both China and Japan ratified this treaty in 1996, with which jurisdiction of each other’s seawater extended. The extension of the jurisdiction further complicated claims on the overlapping Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of the adjoining countries (Kondapalli 2005). The issue of extraction of oil has led to a diplomatic row between China and Japan. Both the countries despite rounds of talks failed to resolve the issue of joint extraction of natural resources on the islands. China National Offshore Oil Corp’s (CNOOC) claim that it has started oil extraction from Chunxiao (Shirakaba as called in Japan) has further led to a diplomatic row between the two countries.

More recently, a group of protesters from China’s Federation for Defending Daiyou Islands arrived near the islets but was repulsed back by the Japanese MSDF using water canon. (Associated Press, October 28, 2007)

The ownership of Takeshima (Bamboo Island as known in Japan) and Dokdo (Solitary Island as called by South Korea) is yet another issue of dispute between Japan and South Korea. The uninhabited island presently under South Korea draws regular protests from Japanese people and administration. Both the parties do not want to renounce their claims as the island is placed at a strategically important location and in the past it had served as temporary watch tower for Japan during Russo-Japanese war and for the US during 1950s Korean War.
Recently the issue came to the limelight in 2006 after Japan sent two of its ships for a maritime survey near the island while in response South Korea sent 18 of its vessels which led the media to speculate as emergence of a flashpoint between the two countries.

Moreover Japan is yet to settle its dispute with Russia over the four islands namely, Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan and Habomai commonly known as Northern island or Kurile islands on which Japan claims its sovereignty. The four islands are ruled by Russia since the end of WWII. The disputes on these islands have prevented the two nations to sign a peace agreement which it was obliged to do with Russia and all its neighbours as per the Potsdam Declaration 1945.

Following restoration of diplomatic relations in 1955, Russia and Japan have opened up dialogue to resolve the territorial disputes and at one point of time both the countries agreed to renounce their claim on two islands each meaning having two each in their occupation. But due to mounting pressure and protests by Japanese people who viewed the effort as “a deal” the status quo continues.

The islands in disputes yet again came into limelight when the then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi announced an adventurous plan to land on the island in a symbolic gesture to convey that it belongs to Japanese territory. But he had to contend with a close aerial survey (having a binocular in his hand), following Russia’s announcement that it will not be responsible if any untoward incident happens once Koizumi steps his foots on the ground.

Yasukuni Shrine : Symbol of an Unhealed Wound
The historical background of Japan’s activities in East Asia continue to constitute a cloud over relations with China and the two Koreas. Former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi and his cabinet colleagues had been paying yearly visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. The visits of Japanese leaders to the shrine where souls of war dead including 14 class A war criminals are enshrined, draws flak form its neighbours and erstwhile colonies, which view the shrine as symbol of Japanese militarism and regard visit to it by officials as
insensitive and insulting. At many occasion it has served as irritants in the diplomatic relations between China and Japan. Following Prime Minister Koizumi’s visit to the shrine when the Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi on an official visit to Japan during that period, flew back home without meeting Prime Minister Koizumi, though she cited “urgent duties” at home as a reason for canceling meeting with Japanese Prime Minister (Japan Times, May 24, 2005).

Following the 5th visit by the Prime Minister Koizumi on October 17, 2005, China termed this visit as an act of provocation that can undermine bilateral relationship while South Korean regretted this visit and hoped that the visit would not recur. In the backdrop of these visits the Chinese and Korean leadership had postponed scheduled meetings with Japanese leadership. Thus the Yasukuni issue has hampered Japan’s normal diplomatic relations with its neighbours.

The issue of revision of Japanese text books particularly references of Nanjing massacre and comfort women used by Japan during the WWII is yet another issue of diplomatic irritants with its neighbours. Changing the historical facts from history textbooks had been criticized by the neighbouring country as trying to wipe out its past record rather than seeking sincere atonement over wartime atrocities.

**Concern from ASEAN on China Japan Rivalry**

The ASEAN members have expressed concern over military rivalry between China and Japan. Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, at a conference “The Future of Asia” held in Tokyo to map out Asian economic integration, blamed both countries for fomenting military rivalry and said that regional solidarity had been “seriously dented” and it was the fault of Japan and China adding that when Tokyo and Beijing pulled in different directions “we will all suffer the consequences”. He forewarned saying that “the repercussions will be even more disastrous if some of our actions result in the undermining of the East Asia Community initiative that we nurtured and launched together”, urging the need to “put an end to this unhealthy slide in our relations.” (ASEAN leaders fear Japan-China rivalry, Reuters, May 25, 2006)
Regarding growing perception of China threat, Badawi said that “China, as a giant economy, and still growing, has given rise to certain apprehensions,” adding that “it has led many regional countries to believe that China is becoming a threat. This will affect our relationships with China.”

The Philippines ambassador, Domingo Siazon, in the same concern forewarned that rivalry between Japan and China could lead to greater defence spending and ignite a regional arms race, soaking up money that might otherwise relieve poverty.

These remarks by the ASEAN leaders suggest that they consider Japan-China rivalry a pull factor in their efforts for economic integration of the region that is why they are concerned over the rift in Sino-Japan relations.

**Japan’s Resurgence: Reaction from Regional Countries**

The regional countries like China, North Korea and Russia have sharply criticized Japan for its Constitutional amendment and ongoing military build up. China in its defense white paper expresses concern over revising Constitution and exercising Collective defense. The 2006 Defense white paper expressed concern stating that “Japan seeks to revise its Constitution and exercise collective defense” adding that Japan’s military posture is becoming “more external oriented”. To the US-Japan defense developments it terms as aimed at “operational integration” and is apprehensive that “the United States is accelerating its realignment of military deployment to enhance its military capability in the Asia-Pacific region.”


However, it does not explicitly refers that what kind of threat it is facing to its security but considers that “complex and sensitive historical and current issues in China’s surrounding areas still affect its security environment”. Regarding the security alliance aimed at containing China, the white paper terms it as a “preventive strategy against China” aimed “to hold its progress in check” without mentioning the name of specific
countries and criticized them saying that “a small number of countries have stirred up a racket about a “China threat.”

Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesperson in its reaction over the passing of a bill for referendum on revising the Constitution by the Japanese Diet, expressed concern and hoped that Japan would adhere to peace. She opined that the Asian countries have given “utmost attention” to the plan to revise the Constitution adding further that “the fact demonstrates that the Japanese people were correct in choosing the path of peaceful development. We hope that Japan adheres to this direction.”

Reacting over the passing of the Constitutional revision bill, China’s official news agency Xinhua, commented that the pace of moves to amend the constitution had quickened under Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and termed Japanese Diet’s passing of the bill as yet another “substantive step” in Japan’s path towards “amending the peace charter”. The Chinese news agency opined that this step has aroused “high concern and misgivings among the people of Asia who suffered Japanese invasion and enslavement.”

South Korea also expressed concern over the Japanese parliament’s approval of the referendum bill to revise the constitution and termed it as a step towards militarism. Su Hae- Suk spokesperson of the pro government Uri Party urged Japan to “stop the move to return to militarism”. (Korea Times, May 16, 2007)

Japan’s Security build up has also alarmed South Korea. Referring to the defense build up started in post Cold war period South Korean President stated that “it is important for us to be equipped with stronger defense capabilities so that Japan would be subject to more damage than security benefits in case a military provocation” (Suryanarayana 2006) by Tokyo. Seen in the context that Japan is strengthening its defense with the US which is also a security ally of South Korea, the remark indicates that the US- South Korea alliance in more recent years has run into some rough weathers.
When Abe government enacted a legislation in 2007 to decide the fate of Constitution through a referendum, South Korean media criticized his move very harshly. The Chosun Ilbo daily in its editorial criticizes the Japanese Prime Minister saying that “Abe called the Constitution ‘letter of reflection by a defeated country’ and pushed an amendment to Article 9”. The daily further opined that “Abe continues to call Japan a normal nation, trying to accentuate his desire to make Japan once again into a country that is capable of using force and wage war by recovering its military and right of belligerency” (www.english.chosun.com/w21data/html/news/200705/200705040025.)

Yet another prewar colony of Japan the North Korea reacting over the effort to revise the Japanese Constitution termed it as a step aimed at turning Japan into a “war state”. A signed commentary carried by the leading official newspaper Rodong Sinmun stated that “the Japanese reactionary’s moves to retrogressively revise the Constitution at any cost are aimed to turn Japan into a war state for aggression”. It added that the “moves to enact a War Constitution is a serious violation of international conventions”. (Xinhua, May 6, 2007)

Reacting over Japan’s Defense Agency’s upgradation into Ministry of defense, North Korea termed it a dangerous development for the Security of Northeast Asia. In an article carried by the cabinet newspaper Monju Joson, the DPRK opined that Japan’s action reflected its ambition to become a military giant pointing that “the successive reactionary governments of Japan after the war have persistently attempted to get rid of this legal and institutional mechanism”. The cabinet newspaper expressed doubt that “Japan will give greater spurs to its conversion into a military giant and militarist expansion overseas,” adding that “this proves that the Japanese reactionaries are dangerous forces of a war of aggression.” (Xinhua, January 18, 2007)

Meanwhile Chinese defense experts has also been expressing concern over Japan’s defense preparedness and strengthening its air force. Regarding the Japanese airforces decision to deploy F15 fighters in Okinawa by 2009, which Japan claimed as aimed at checking “air space violation”, Chinese experts have viewed this as a move to target
China. "We can hardly not think of the move as targeted at China, given the geographical proximity of China and Okinawa", said Shen Shisun a researcher at China Institute of International Studies. He termed the deployment as "cold war mentality" adding that "it is sheer Cold War mentality". He opined that "Japan is over-reacting to China's rapid development and its growing international influence, and tends to mark out China because of our differences on ideology". (International Herald Tribune, October 9, 2007)

The defense buildup and efforts to forge security arrangements have also drawn concern from Russia as well. Russian Defense Minister Sergei Lavrov opposed the missile defense system, saying "we are opposed to the construction of a missile defense system aimed at securing military superiority" (The Japan Times Oct 16, 2007), and argued the system could be directed at Russian and Chinese strategic arms.

Lavrov also cautioned against closer military ties among Japan, the United States and Australia, which is likewise studying cooperating in the Tokyo-Washington missile defense system. He expressed that "a closed format for military and political alliances" is not constructive and "will not be able to increase mutual trust in the region," adding that "it will bring about results that are opposite to the expectations" of the three countries. Lavrov also warned that the Japan-U.S. defense system could lead to a regional arms race.

As regards to constitutional amendment in Japan and its newfound military interests, there have been no official statements from Australia which had ensured that Japan enshrines pacifism in its postwar constitution. Though one of the Australian Security experts Alan Dupont has welcomed the Constitutional revision process hoping that it will help Japan to "participate in building and sustaining regional order and combating the emerging threats to security". He observed that "Tokyo's desire to pursue a more proactive security policy is not an unreasonable response to the more threatening and volatile security environment it faces" adding that "after nearly six decades of quasi-
pacifism, it is time for Japan to move beyond the ideals of the post-World War II peace constitution.” (The Sun Herald April 19, 2005)

It seems that the Australian government, is not worried even if Japan renounces pacifism considering that Japan can play an important role in combating the emerging threats to regional security, and serve to safeguard Australian security concerns, if it strengthens its defense.

Acknowledging Japan’s contribution in the region Australia’s defense whitepaper declares that “Australia has no closer nor valuable partner in the region than Japan” and has welcomed Japan’s “efforts to contribute more directly to regional and global stability” *(National Defense Review (Australia), 2007: 9)*

**Public Opinion: Neighbours view Regarding Japan and its Defense Upgradation**

The talk of a revision in the constitution has caused concern among the people of the adjoining countries, especially China- a pre-war colony of Japan. Following release of LDP’s draft constitution- proposing to have a full scaled military, a survey conducted by Social Survey Institute of China (SSIC), indicates that about 71 % of the respondents think such a move reveals the ambition of Japan to seek military expansion overseas and 65 % believed it violated an international convention banning Japan’s post-war military build-up. About 80 per cent of the interviewees saw Japan’s move as an issue related to international security, not the country’s internal affairs. (China Daily, November 26, 2005). (See Figure 17)
There exist trust deficit regarding Japan and its policies among the neighbouring country’s general public as well. So the hostility between Japan and the neighbouring countries which are reported through media is not only at the administrative or policy level, it is also found at the general public level as well. A December 2006 surveys conducted by China’s Horizon Research Consultancy group, indicate that there is deep rooted mistrust among the masses towards Japan and its policies.

In a recent survey when the general public was asked to name the country which poses largest threat to China’s interest, an overwhelming majority (73.43) responded that they considered Japan as the number one country while US came second. (www.horizon-china.com/servlet/Page?Node=8724) (See the figure 18)
The country that poses the largest threat to China's interests in the eyes of the general public

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>73.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>62.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taiwan</td>
<td>12.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>4.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Korea</td>
<td>2.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the same survey asked to identify the element which could become greatest threat to world peace in the coming years, majority of Chinese considered American hegemonism could destabilize world peace. However 5.32% of respondents did considered Japanese militarism that may concern international peace while 7.37% thought that conflict over energy resources could disturb the world peace. (See figure19) The response that conflict over energy resources may cause disturbance to world peace gains importance in the context that dispute between China and Japan over energy resources in their EEZ has been a bone of contention between the two neighbouring countries and have affected their diplomatic relations.

Figure 18
Which one of the following elements do you think is the greatest threat to world peace over the next five years?

- American hegemonism: 24.77
- International terrorism: 17.98
- Conflict across the Taiwan strait: 14.56
- The spread of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons: 14.23
- Conflict over energy resources: 7.37
- Japanese militarism: 5.32
- Korean Peninsula crisis: 4.44
- Islamic fundamentalists: 3.58
- Israeli-Palestinian conflict: 1.25
- India-Pakistan conflicts: 0.71
- Conflicts among ethnic groups: 0.03

**Figure 19**

When the same survey asked them to rate the most friendly countries, Japan did not find a mention. (see figure 20).

The most friendly countries/region with China in the general public’s eyes

- Russia: 33.20
- North Korea: 21.51
- Hong Kong: 21.18
- South Korea: 18.66
- Singapore: 11.07
However, when the same survey asked to rate the most important country from economic point of view, Japan came at second position with 21.31% of the respondents considered Japan as the most important country for China while the US came first with 54.83%, far ahead of Japan. (See figure 21)

**The most important economy for China in the general public’s eyes.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>54.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>21.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>16.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hong Kong</td>
<td>13.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Korea</td>
<td>12.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Figure 21*

From the security point of view, Chinese again do not rate Japan as their security partner while the US whom they consider hegemonic still find second most important country with 19.23% respondents as their security partner after Russia (47.1%). (See Figure 22)
China’s partner on security issues in the eyes of the general public

- Russia: 47.1
- USA: 19.23
- South Korea: 17.80
- North Korea: 17.59
- Hong Kong: 9.73

Figure 22

When the Chinese were asked to rate their favourable countries, both the general public and elite identified Japan as least favourable country with 1.83 and 1.76 point approval respectively. They found South Korea the most favourable with around 3 point rating. Therefore the data indicates that in the eyes of Chinese, Japan still need to do a lot to gain their trust as a neighbour. (See Figure 23)
How do you view the following countries? (The data uses 4-point scale. Point 4 represents highly favorable; Point 1 represents not favorable at all)

![Graph showing ratings for different countries](image)

Figure 23

Japan has been trying hard to establish itself as a responsible power among the comity of nations but its neighbour still belief that they have not reached up to that stature. When the survey posed a question asking them how they view Japan's power in the next decade. Only 30% of general public rated Japan as a rising power while among the Chinese elites only 27% thought that Japan's power will rise in the next decade. Majority of them considered that the Japanese power will not change in the next few years. (See Figure 24)
What do you think Japan’s power will be in 5 to 10 years?

Japan in the next 5-10 years in the eyes of the general public

- Rising power: 30.91%
- No change: 44.24%
- Declining power: 9.92%
- Refuse to answer/not sure: 14.93%

Figure 24 A

Japan in the next 5-10 years in the eyes of the elites

- Rising power: 27.17%
- No change: 60.07%
- Declining power: 9.82%
- Refuse to answer/not sure: 2.95%

Figure 24 B

When the survey asked Chinese the reason of their disliking Japan, majority (42%) of them cited that memory of Nanjing massacre is still alive among them while 10% of them
attributed to visit of Yasukuni shrine – the symbol of Japanese world war II enshrining souls of Japanese soldiers- as the reason while 9% of them rated Japan’s militarism as a reason of their disgust towards their neighbour. (See Figure 25)

What are the top 5 reasons why you don't like Japan?

- Nanjing massacre: 42.19%
- Historical issues: 19.76%
- Denial of historical crimes: 15.62%
- Visits of Yasukuni shrine: 10.19%
- Militarism: 9.57%

And when they were asked to suggest ways how Sino-Japanese relations could be resolved majority of them (54%) cited that the historical issues should be resolved first while 36% of them thought it could be resolved keeping the historical issues behind. Both the data’s show that Chinese are still emotive with the historical issues and think that the historical issues should be resolved first to better Sino-Japanese relations. (See Figure 26)
In what way do you think the difficulties in the Sino-Japanese relations should be resolved?

![Bar Chart]

Figure 25

As regards to South Korean perception towards Japan, there was no survey available on how they view Japan's ongoing Constitutional amendment process. However, an opinion poll conducted by Chosun Ilbo in March 2008 indicated that among the 724 respondents, a majority of 31.4 percent considered Japan most unfavourable country.

http://news.chosun.com/site/data/html_dir/2008/03/05/2008030500047.html (See Figure 26)

![Line Chart]

Figure 26
When the same survey asked the respondent to choose the most favourable country, a whopping 54.8% of the South Korean respondent considered it was the US, while only 9.2% of the respondents considered Japan as their favourable country. (See Figure 27)

![Most Favourable Country for South Korea](image)

**Figure 27**

As Regards to Japanese perception towards the world affairs concerning their security, a cabinet office survey conducted in February 2006 indicated that, majority of them (65%) considered it is Korean peninsula affairs that affects their security, and Chinese military modernization came third to their security concern (38%). *(Defense of Japan 2008:536) (See Figure 28)
Q Which International affairs you are interested in as regards to the peace and Security of Japan?

Figure 28 (multiple answer, sample size 1657)

An over all analysis of these opinion poll in the East Asian countries about each other can be an important tool to asses how the people would react if their existing disputes aggravates for some reason. In most of the democracies it has been seen that people play an important role in confidence building among the countries. If believe on these opinions, there exists trust deficit among them which is not a good sign given the countries have several issue of dispute.

Japan’s defence on it “Defence buildup”:

It is not only Japan’s neighbours that have expressed concerns over its defense build up. Japan too has expressed concerns over the ongoing defense preparedness by its neighbours. Regarding North Korea, Japan’s Defense white paper 2007 says “concerns over North Korea’s nuclear weapon and ballistic missiles have grown more serious.”. Expressing concerns over July 2006 ballistic missile tests claim to conduct underground nuclear tests the Defense White paper terms these actions as “clear threat to peace and security of not only Japan but also the rest of the world” adding that the progress on the nuclear issue and North Korea’s nuclear posture bear careful monitoring." *(Defense of Japan 2007:4)

Japan has also criticized China for increasing its defense expenditure and conducting anti-satellite missile tests. The Defense White paper notes “ ... China a regional power
with tremendous political and economic influence, has been continuously boosting its defense spending and modernizing its military forces drawing international attention to its presence”. Regarding transparency of China’s military build up the White paper states that “there are also concerns of lack of transparency regarding China’s military capabilities and the absence of sufficient explanation by the Chinese government about the destruction of one of its own satellites in a test of January this year has made other countries, including Japan apprehensive with regard to peaceful use of space and their own security”.

The National Institute of Defense Studies, a sister organization of Japanese Defense Ministry expresses apprehension that China may establish China centered new order in the region”. It opines that “China’s influence in East Asia is likely to grow more than ever. However it is not yet clear whether China will choose to act as a responsible power of the international community within the existing order or will attempt to establish “China centred new order in the region”. *(East Asian strategic Review 2007: 10)

It questions China’s military modernization asking “.... Chinese efforts to modernize its armed forces are leading to the enhancement of power projection capabilities by introducing of Russian weapons and technology. Expressing concerns over its defense budget it says that it “remains less than adequate” and urges that “China should be more accountable for not its defense expenditure and equipments but also its military strategy”.

*(East Asian strategic Review 2007: 10)

Regarding its own on going defense build up it claims that it is building “modest defense capability under the Constitution adding that it is purely for defense purposes without becoming a military power” *(Defense of Japan 2007: chap2.1p.4)
Japan-US Australia and India: A Quad to Contain China?

Japan has been claiming that the US Japan Security Arrangements are indispensable in ensuring Security of Japan and presence of US military is essential for the maintenance of peace and stability in the Asia pacific region *(Defense of Japan 2008: 212)

However after the rise of China and test firing of North Korean missiles and its nuclear program, the U.S. and Japan tend to extend their original bi-lateral defense cooperation to a multi-lateral level, especially with those countries that share common value with them- mainly Australia and India.

During the past two years, the U.S., Japan, Australia and India have moved forward to strengthen their diplomatic tie and security cooperation which includes the U.S.-Japan-Australia “Trilateral Strategic Dialogue”(March 2006); Indo- Japanese defense cooperation agreements (May 2006); Japan and India strategic partnership (December 2006) and the “Japan-Australian Security Consultative” (March 2007).

Australia due to its proximity in trade with China had been silent on the issue of “Rising China”. However, for the first time in its 2007 Defense whitepaper, Australia has expressed concern over China’s “pace and Scope of military modernization” saying that its “new and destructive capabilities such as the anti-satellite (ASAT) missile” (tested in January 2007) “could create misunderstanding and instability in the region”. *(National Defense Review (Australia) 2007:9)

In their joint declaration on Security Cooperation (March 2007) Australia and Japan resolved to “strengthen their cooperation and consultation on issues of common strategic interest in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond” which “includes cooperation for a peaceful resolution of issues related to North Korea”, and its “nuclear development, ballistic missile activities”. Japan and Australia also recognised “the threat to peace and
stability in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond posed by terrorism” and resolved to “further strengthen cooperation to address this threat”.

Following the change in Australian regime and Kevin Rudd assuming the charge of leadership, a closer Japan-Australia regime seemed changing as the new Australian administration laid much importance with countries trade ties with China. However, Australia’s security concern towards Rising China is not over.

While unveiling a strategy “in response to a regional military build up and shifts in power” Australia warned that war could be possible in the Asia Pacific in the next two decades, as emerging powers such as China flexed their military might.

Australia’s defence white paper 2009 castes doubt over China’s growing military capability and its intentions as follows:

“China will be the strongest Asian military power, by a considerable margin ... A major power of China’s stature, can be expected to develop a globally significant military capability befitting its size”.

The Australian defence whitepaper added that the “the space, scope and structure of China’s military modernisation have the potential to give its neighbours cause of concern if not carefully explained.

The whitepaper suggested China to “reach out to others to build confidence.” Australia sees the Chinese military modernisation “beyond the scope of what would be required for a conflict over Taiwan” and reiterates that China should convince the countries in the Asia pacific region that its rise will not “diminish their sovereignty”.
Thus Chinese military might have given an opportunity to Australia to further boost its defense and its “Force 2030” plan pledges to acquire long range cruise missiles, induct 12 submarines, 100 F-35 fighter jets and eight new warships.

It says that “the force 2030 will be a more potent force....particularly in undersea warfare and anti-submarine warfare, surface maritime warfare, air superiority.... And cyber warfare”. (http://www.defence.gov.au/whitepaper/ext_reader.htm)

Thus it is clear from the recent defence white paper’s explicit reference to China, that its largest trading partner –Australia- does not buy its argument of a “peaceful rise” and seems prepared to strengthen its military capability so that it must not “diminish” its sovereignty.

India which has been reluctant to be part of an alliance to Contain China and had expressed that it has no intention of allowing itself to be “utilized by any power to contain any other power”. On the other hand Japan which has started its security dialogue with India to secure the Sea Line of Communication (SLOC) and had joint drills with MSDF and Indian navy, had been trying to extend the cooperation beyond SLOC. Indicating for the first time towards this need, former Japan’s Defense Agency Chief, (who briefly assumed charge of Defense Minister) Shigeru Ishiba observed—“the Most important thing for this region is to have a good collaboration between Australia, the US, India and Japan. These four countries should have a candid exchange of views and then try to make a contribution to formulate rules for international society.” (Ishiba 2005)

India however, showed its implicit interest in this regard for the first time when the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe signed joint agreement in December 2006. Article 46 of the statement expressed commitment for “having Dialouge among Japan, India and other like minded countries in the Asia Pacific region on themes of mutual interests” adding that the two governments will “consult on modalities”. The term like minded countries in Asia Pacific was construed by the security expert as exclusion of countries like China and North Korea having “communist dictatorship".
The defense relations further strengthened when Indian Foreign Minister visited Tokyo in March 2007 and signed joint agreements. In which the two parties expressed satisfaction over “the steady development of cooperation and exchanges in the field of defence and security” and welcomed the goodwill visit of the Indian Navy ships to Japan, Defence Policy Dialogue, and developments in service-to-service cooperation”. Moreover the two sides endorsed the view that India and Japan must cooperate closely to ensure the safety and security of international maritime traffic vital for their economic well being as well as for the region.

More importantly the Ministers expressed “grave concerns on the nuclear test conducted by DPRK” and “emphasised the importance of realising the denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula.”(http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/joint0703.html)

India’s participation in the recently conducted joint exercises in the Bay of Bengal with ships from Japan, the US, Australia and Singapore was enough to believe that it is being drawn closer in “containment of China strategy” though they admit that these exercises were aimed at responding a regional disaster.

With the regime change in US, Australia and also in Japan with Abe who proposed the idea of forming a quad-lateral alliance, the contain China strategy seemed pushed into oblivion. But the present Obama administration has renewed its effort to revive the idea of a closer relation with democracies sharing universal values. In her first visit to Japan US secretary of State Hillary Clinton urged that “Consultation and coordination with the Republic of Korea, Australia and India, which share universal values” should be intensified for realising the goal of a prosperous, stable and open East Asia (The Hindu, February 6, 2009). US this time has not mentioned forming a close security alliance for containing China but has talked of forming alliance with countries in the Asia pacific which share “universal values” and have left out China among the four countries mentioned in its statements, which is enough to believe that US has not left a hope of
cobbling an alliance with India, Australia, South Korea and Japan to meet its security goals.

Conclusion:
With this discussion we can draw a conclusion that in the post cold war period, the US pursuit to use Japan and its bases as a strategic means of retaining global hegemony have created unease among some of Japan’s neighbours prompting them in turn to boost their military means. The whole region including Japan seems caught in vicious circle of distrust and armament.

On one hand China and North Korea are trying to maximize their military might to meet their security aspirations and goals. China by test-firing anti-satellite missiles and amassing Naval strength seems prepared to face any challenge posed by its rivals while North Korea by conducting long range missile and nuclear tests is signaling that it is ready to counter any threat to oust the present Pyongyong regime. Japan on the other hand, sees all these developments a challenge and threat to its own security and has embarked on Constitutional amendment, has strengthened its defense by relocating US bases in different parts of its territory and equipping its defense forces with fighters and missile interceptors.

If China has forged the alliance with the resurgent Russia, having formed Shanghai Cooperation Organization (which has often termed as a potential countervailing NATO) to counterbalance US influence in the region, Japan and the US are making effort to form a quadrilateral arrangement expanding the present US-Japan alliance by incorporating Australia and India.

Seen in this context it seems that there exists security dilemma in the Asia Pacific and entire region have entered in a state of classical balance of power. But one thing that has held this region so far from an untoward incident is strong economic interdependence. The region certainly needs a strong regional security framework to pull it away from the balance of power game.