

Foreign Policy of Japan in 21st Century

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Introduction



- Japan is situated in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan is an acknowledged economic super power. In fact, it is the first non-military (civilian) super power. Japan's economy currently ranks third worldwide. The nominal Gross Domestic Product of Japan is \$4.73 trillion. It's GDP per capita is \$38,893. Japan is an exporting giant. Japan's economy depends mainly on exports which count for more than \$640 billion. Cars' export amount to nearly \$100 billion, while vehicles' spare parts amount to \$30 billion.



Determinants of Foreign Policy of Japan



- There are two sources of the determinants i.e. External and Internal or Domestic. Latter includes geostrategic location of a country, role of media, factors influencing public opinion, size of the population, historical background, cultural norms and traditions, natural resources, technology and national interest etc. External determinants may be outcome of internal determinants, regional and global politico-economic structure and behaviour, attitude of neighbouring and distant countries having interest of other country and alliances i.e. military or political.
- Like other countries, foreign policy of Japan is also based on certain determinants. The internal and external conditions have influenced shaping foreign policy of the country.



Determinants of Foreign Policy of Japan



- **Geostrategic location:** Japan's location is unique. It does not share land borders with any country. It has maritime neighbours. According to one source Japan consists of more than four thousands islands in the Pacific Ocean.
- **Dependency on maritime trade:** Being a country without land connectivity with countries, it has to depend on maritime trade. The situation requires Japan to have normal and cordial relations with the countries which may hamper smooth sailing of its ships.
- **Opposition to Nuclear armament:** Japan suffered August 1945 nuclear attacks. It signed Nuclear non-Proliferation Treaty in 1976. Japan also ratified Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) in 1996. Japan condemned nuclear explosions in the region of South Asia in May, 1998. Japan produces electricity through nuclear power plants but it has not enriched uranium for the purpose of nuclear weapons.



Determinants of Foreign Policy of Japan



- **Ally of the U.S. under bilateral defence arrangement:** The Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan was first signed in 1951 at the San Francisco. The Security Treaty was later amended further on January 1960 between the US and Japan in Washington. The treaty established that each country would seek to resolve any international disputes peacefully. Article 6 of the treaty contains a Status of Forces Agreement on the stationing of United States forces in Japan. A central issue in the debate over the continued US military presence is the concentration of troops on the small Japanese prefecture of Okinawa. US military bases cover about one-fifth of Okinawa that serve around 75 percent of the US Forces in Japan. On 19 April 2019, Japan and the United States confirmed that cyber attacks are also covered by the bilateral security treaty.
- **Public opinion:** Public opinion determines a nature of foreign policy of a country. Behaviour of the public of denouncing war, observance of cultural norms and establish peaceful relations with all the countries etc have compelled Japanese foreign policy makers to frame external policy according to wishes of the Japanese people. When thinking process began to amend article 9 of the Japanese constitution people played important role in building public opinion on the matter.
- **The Constitution of Japan:** The philosophy of Japan's foreign policy is found in the spirit of its Constitution. Provisions of Article 9 of the Constitution and the "high ideals and purposes" indicated in the preamble of the Constitution contain none other than the philosophy on which Japan's foreign policy stands. Article 9 of the Constitution states: "Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes."

Determinants of Foreign Policy of Japan



- **The Friendship Treaty between the U.S and Japan:** The Friendship Treaty between the U.S and Japan signed in 1951 and revised in 1960. Japan accepted U.S defence shield and developed its army for the purposes of self defence.
- **Industrialisation:** Industrialisation also shaped the foreign policy of the country. It favoured the balance of trade in favour of Japan.
- **Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a tool of Diplomacy:** Japan started Official Development Assistance for extending cooperation to the friendly countries. With passage of time ODA emerged as a tool of diplomacy.
- **The cold war:** The cold war period also played pivotal role in determining the nature of Japan's foreign policy. The end of World War II gave birth to bipolar world. The U.S and former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) led the capitalistic and socialist bloc respectively. However, China maintained its independent posture and did not indulge in bloc politics. A few factors including the U.S Friendship Treaty made Japan a part of the capitalistic bloc.



Determinants of Foreign Policy of Japan



- **Willingness of sharing responsibility of maintaining international peace and security:** In 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. The U.S and its allies started Operation Desert Storm. Japan contributed 13 billion US dollars in the operation. It conveyed Japan's willingness of sharing responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. Subsequently, for the first time, Japanese forces became part of the United Nations peace keeping forces stationed in Cambodia in 1992. It was for the first time that Japan sent its forces abroad.
- **Disintegration of the USSR:** The world experienced disintegration of the USSR which put the era of cold war to an end. In changed scenario, countries economically sound got opportunity to rule the global governance. Japan being amongst first four economies of the world occupied important position in the post cold war period.
- **Terrorist attack on World Trade Centre:** Incident gave awakening call to the world that an enemy has got birth of which attacks are not restricted to territorial boundaries. At least 24 Japanese became victim of the terrorist attack on World Trade Centre, New York. Japan quickly responded to the situation. It condemned the attacks. It introduced necessary legislations in the country. It joined international coalition "**War on Terror**" and contributed in "Operation Freedom Enduring-Operation Interdict Maritime". It continued till 2010 when Japan decided to withdraw refuelling facility to the ships participating in the operation in Indian Ocean. It refuelled 938 times delivering 510,000 kilo liters of fuel free of charge. This facility was extended in 2002.



Objectives and Priorities



- **(1)The philosophy of Japan's foreign policy is found in the spirit of its Constitution:**
- An international peace, based on justice and order,
- The Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and
- No threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes,
- Opposition of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance for all time from the earth.



Objectives and Priorities



- (2) International cooperation initiative
- **A-** Enhancement of Official Development Assistance (ODA): Official development assistance (ODA) is defined by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) as government aid that promotes and specifically targets the economic development and welfare of developing countries. The DAC adopted ODA as the “gold standard” of foreign aid in 1969 and it remains the main source of financing for development aid.
- **B-** Strengthening international cultural



Objectives and Priorities



- (3) To promote prosperity of the world under a system of open market economy
- (4) To establishing stable international relations based on dialogue and cooperation
- (5) Make efforts to protect universal values like democracy and fundamental human rights
- (6) To keep making efforts to build peace and stability of Asia and the world
- (7) To make efforts to expel protectionism and maintain a free and open trading system.



Objectives and Priorities



- (8) To promote friendly relations with such neighbouring countries as China and the Soviet Union, which play an important role in the international community
- Japan is showing signs of independence in its China policy. Tokyo has adopted a posture of “conditional engagement,” most notably in respect to Beijing’s Belt and Road initiative. This has led to the exchange of 52 memorandums on cooperation in third-country markets. Japan has upheld its basic policy of working to lower tariffs and ultimately create a mega-free trade area including China via such frameworks as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (encompassing ASEAN) and the trilateral **Japan–China–Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement**. But the basic source of tension between the two countries has not changed. China’s military presence in the East China Sea has not diminished in the least, and the Coast Guard is more active than ever in the area.
- Japan has also been asserting its independence with respect to Russia. Japan is going its own way in the pursuit of economic cooperation with Russia.



Objectives and Priorities



- **(9) To promote arms control measures such as disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation:** Japan strongly advocates its Three Non-Nuclear Principles: non-possession, non-production, and non-introduction of nuclear weapons to Japan
- **(10) To make efforts to expel protectionism and maintain a free and open trading system.**
- **(11) Efforts to solve energy problems in cooperation with other countries concerned through the International Energy Agency (IEA) and other opportunities.**
- **(12) To promote public diplomacy**



Foreign Policy Goals in the 21st Century



- 1. Goal to re-establish itself as a great global power.
- 2. To seek a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.
- 3. To expand its global role through global security maintenance and increased participation in UN international peacekeeping operations.
- 4. To promote peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula, and more urgently, a peaceful resolution of North Korean issues.
- 5. to develop a cooperative relationship with China by peacefully resolving Taiwan issues and improving the transparency of China's military affairs.



Foreign Policy Goals in the 21st Century



- 6. Promotion of fundamental values like democracy & human rights.
- 7. Reduction and non proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD).
- 8. Prevention and eradication of terrorism .
- 9. To improve the effectiveness of the UN and increase its own role in conflict resolution.
- 10. To promote free-trade agreements.
- 11. Expansion of Self-Defence Forces (SDF).



CONCLUSION



- Japan's foreign policy has seen a slow evolution, and national interest is now a priority in its foreign policies and goals. As Japan continues to grow economically and play a greater global role, many political and social norms may place constraints on the military. History has proven the futility of war, and the Japanese people still strongly advocate pacifism. With such a large economy, many people may also ask the question, "Why attack if we can just buy it?" Also, policies that could possibly negatively impact the economy will still be highly debated as Japan's foreign policy has always included a focus on its economy. The overall evolution of Japan's foreign policy has been the shifting focus from social norms to national interest.

