

Japan, the United States, and India as Key Balancers in Asia

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Recently, Japan appears to be engaging in balancing behavior to counter China's assertiveness. Japan's security relations with the United States and Australia have become closer. Japan is planning to donate patrol ships to Vietnam and the Philippines. Recently, Japan-India security cooperation has also shown signs of progress.

In the past, many experts believed that Japan would choose to bandwagon with China instead of balancing against China. In Professor Samuel Huntington's book *The Clash of Civilizations*, he pointed out that "Japanese alliance behavior has been basically bandwagoning, not balancing" and "alignment with the dominant power."² He also noted that, "As the U.S. role in Asia subsides and China's becomes paramount, Japanese policy will adapt accordingly."³ While there is no doubt that Professor Huntington was a respected expert, it would appear that the actual situation differs from his prediction.

Indeed, Japan's earlier alliance behavior demonstrates that Japan avoided bandwagoning. For example, when Japan allied with the British in 1902, Russia was the most important factor that influenced Japan's choice of an ally. When Japan allied with Germany and Italy, the deterioration of relations with the United States was an important factor. When Japan allied with the United States, expanding communism was a serious threat. In view of these examples, Japan's traditional alliance behavior is best characterized as balancing, not bandwagoning. Therefore, security researchers need to reassess Japan's nature.

If Japan's alliance behavior tends toward balancing, with which country or countries will Japan ally? It is obvious that the United States will be the most important ally for Japan. However, India is also an interesting possible ally because India's geographical location in relation to China is similar to the United Kingdom's location in relation to Russia, Germany's location in relation to the United States, and the United States' location in relation to Communist countries.

Therefore, this paper discusses three important questions underlying this analysis: What kind of situation is Japan facing? How could Japan and India cooperate? And will India become a trustworthy security partner for the Japan-U.S. alliance?

1. What kind of security situation is Japan facing?

China has started to expand its military activities around Japan and in the South China Sea. For example, in the East China Sea, a Chinese nuclear attack submarine violated the territorial seas of Japan in 2004. Since 2008, China has also been conducting its own naval exercises east of

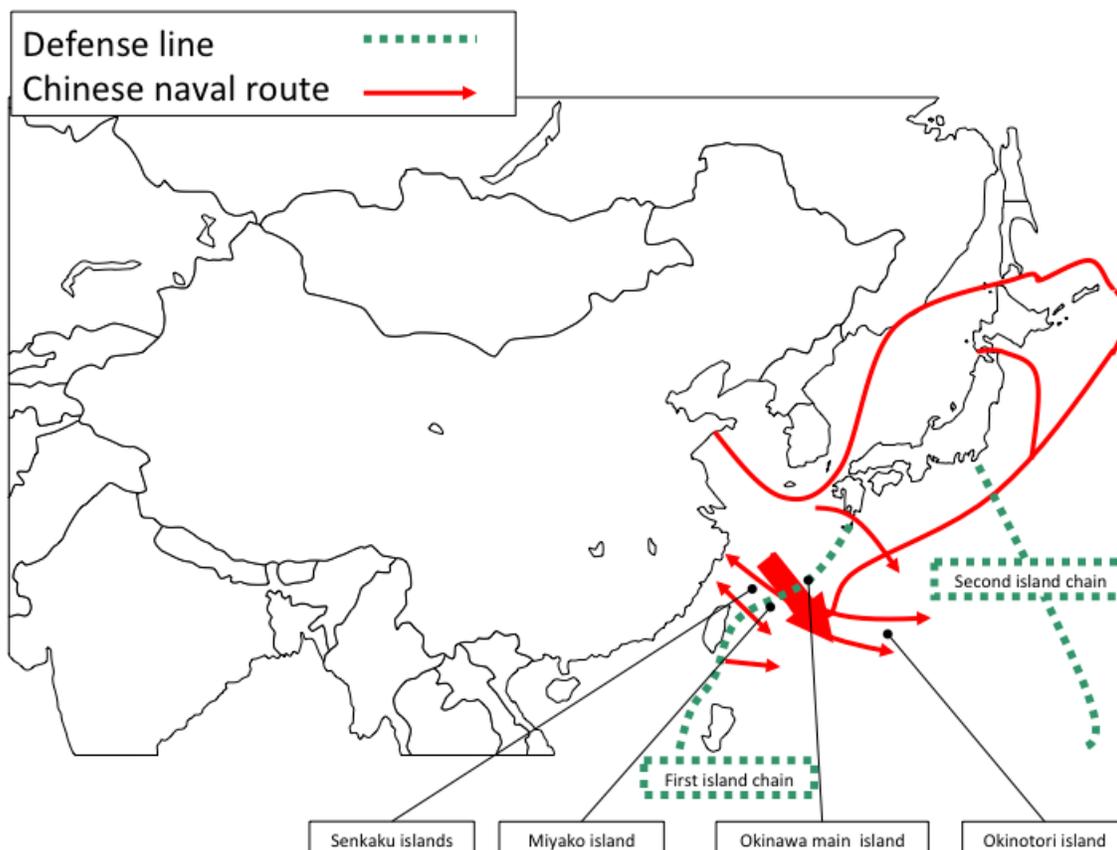
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² Samuel Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*, New York: Simon and Schuster (kindle edition), 1996, Location 9316.

³ Ibid.

Japan in the Pacific Ocean. The area in which these naval exercises are performed has been expanding from the first island chain to the second island chain, which represents China’s ideal line of defense. In August 2013, five Chinese warships, which had participated in Russia-China joint exercises, travelled around Japan. This was the first time the Chinese navy had circumnavigated Japan (Figure 1).

Figure 1: China’s naval activities around Japan⁴



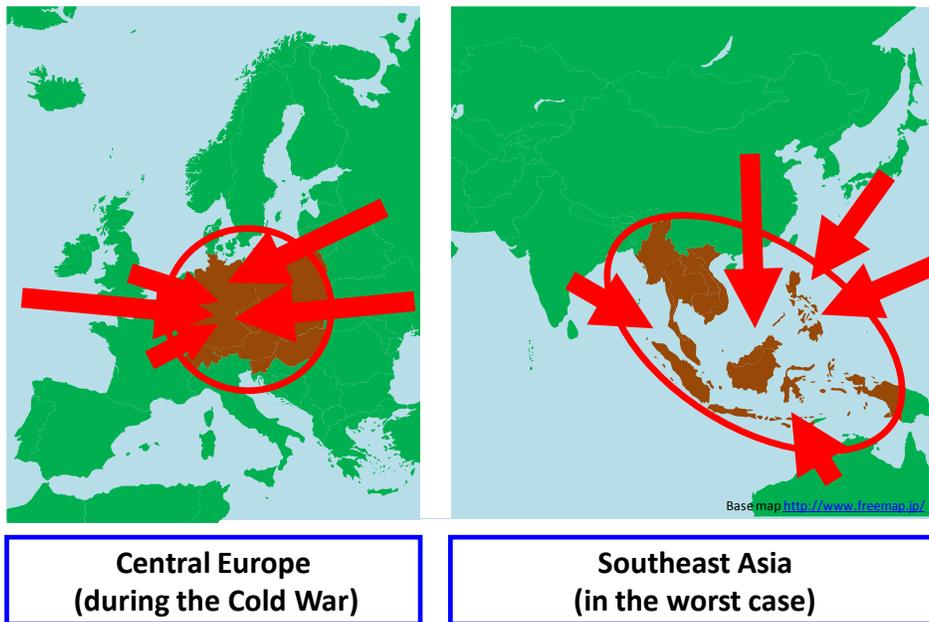
In addition to naval activities, the Chinese air force has been expanding its activities as well. The 2013 white paper published by Japan’s Ministry of Defense pointed out that in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, “the number of scrambles against Chinese aircraft exceeded the number of those against Russian aircraft for the first time.”⁵ In FY 2013, the number of scrambles against Chinese aircraft increased further. In addition, in November 2013, China set up a new Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ). This will enable the Chinese air force to give air cover to Chinese naval ships to expand their area of activities. In addition, in May and June 2014, two Chinese fighters came close to colliding with two Japanese Air Self-Defense Force aircraft.

⁴ Source: Ministry of Defense of Japan, *Defense of Japan 2014*, 41, http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2014/DOJ2014_1-1-3_web_1031.pdf.

⁵ Ministry of Defense of Japan, *Defense of Japan 2013*, 1, http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2013/04_Digest_part3.pdf.

The South China Sea is also vital for the security of Japan for three geographic reasons. First, Southeast Asia is a strategically important location. Southeast Asia is situated along key sea lines of communication (SLOCs) between the Middle East and Northeast Asia, which includes Japan. In addition, Southeast Asia is a resource rich region. Second, there are no great powers in Southeast Asia, unlike Japan in Northeast Asia and India in South Asia. Third, Southeast Asia is surrounded by great powers like China, Japan, the United States, Australia, and India. A parallel may be seen in Central Europe during the Cold War when we consider nations like East and West Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and others. During the Cold War, Central Europe became the focus of the U.S.-Soviet great power game. If Southeast Asia becomes the theater of another great power game, it is likely that Japan’s SLOCs could face a serious crisis (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Southeast Asia could be a theater for great power competition



China claims 90% of the South China Sea under their “nine-dash line.” One may recall the China-Vietnam skirmish after China set up an oil rig in the South China Sea in the spring of 2014. Since China is building airstrips in the South China Sea, we can expect that China will provide air cover for their military and paramilitary ships in the near future. Japan is therefore understandably concerned about the situation in the South China Sea.

The changing military balance as the background reality

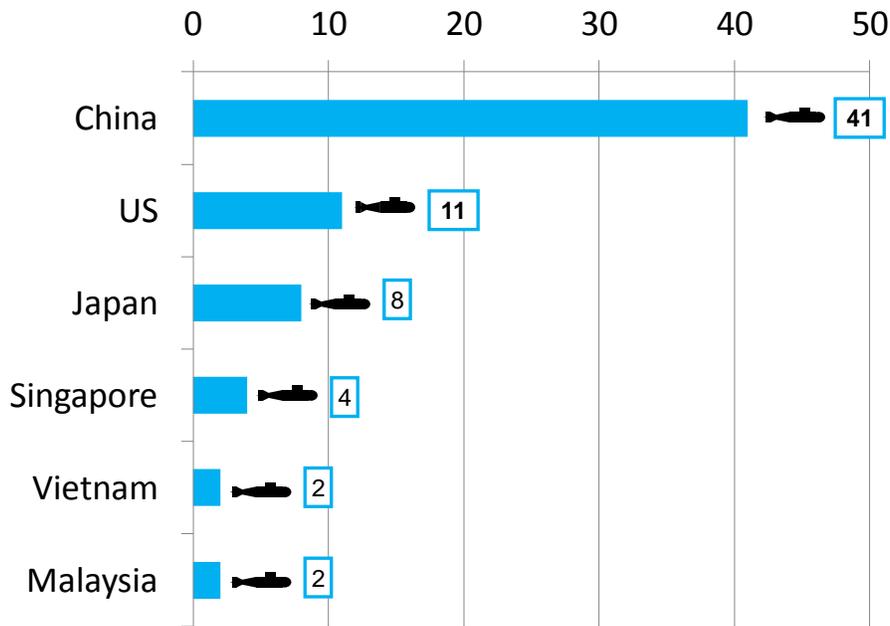
Why has China’s assertiveness intensified lately? In August 2013, Japanese defence minister Itsunori Onodera made a noteworthy statement at a symposium in Tokyo. He said that “China has made more and more advancement into the seas... When it did not have as much military capability, China tried to promote dialogue and economic cooperation, setting territorial rows aside... But when it sees a chance, any daylight between a nation and its ally, it makes blunt advancements. This is what is happening and what we should learn from the situation in

Southeast Asia.”⁶ This statement clearly explains that Southeast Asian countries are unable to deter China’s assertive actions because they do not have enough military power.

Throughout history, Chinese maritime expansion has tended to fill power vacuums. For example, in the South China Sea, China occupied the Paracel Islands in 1974, just after the Vietnam War ended and the United States withdrew from the region. In 1988, after the Soviets withdrew from Vietnam, China attacked the Spratly Islands. Similarly, after the United States withdrew from the Philippines, China occupied Mischief Reef, which both the Philippines and Vietnam claimed.

Since the Cold War, the military balance around the South China Sea has been changing. The procurement of submarines is a good example, since the main task of submarines is the deterrence and execution of war. From 2000 to 2014, China acquired at least 41 submarines (Figure 3). During the same period, Singapore acquired only 4 submarines, while Malaysia and Vietnam acquired 2 each. In the South China Sea, no other country has acquired submarines. Like the situation in the South China Sea, the military balance between Japan and China has also been changing rapidly. Compared with China’s whopping 41, Japan has acquired only 8 submarines since 2000.

Figure 3: The number of submarines acquired from 2000 to 2014



⁶ Onodera quoted in Harumi Ozawa, “Japan Could Be ‘Main Player’ in Asia Conflict: Minister,” *Defense News*, August. 26, 2013. <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20130826/DEFREG03/308260005/Japan-Could-Main-Player-Asia-Conflict-Minister>.

Reflecting on the situation regarding Japan and countries around the South China Sea, it is evident that the United States emerges as the key player in maintaining a military balance in that region. The caveat, however, is that U.S. power is also declining.

Since 2000, the United States has acquired only 11 submarines and the total number of submarines owned by the United States declined from 127 in 1990 to 72 in 2014. Despite U.S. submarines being far more sophisticated than China's, both the United States and China possess about 70 submarines each, numerically speaking.

Given such trends, despite former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta's statement at the annual Shangri-La Dialogue in 2012 that "By 2020, the navy will reposture its forces from today's roughly 50-50 split between the Pacific and the Atlantic to about a 60-40 split between those oceans,"⁷ it remains doubtful whether the number of U.S. warships will be enough to deter China's assertive behavior as the total number of warships the United States possesses declines.

In addition, there is a possibility that the United States will not be able to concentrate all of its military power in Asia because the United States might need to deal with problems in other parts of the world. Japan and countries around the South China Sea are concerned about the United States becoming involved in conflicts in Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Africa, or Central and South America. Such conflicts would focus U.S. attention away from Asia and prevent the United States from providing enough military support in the South China Sea region.

Hence, as mentioned above, it is important to consider the alarming speed of China's military modernization. Because of the rapid pace of China's military modernization, Japan and countries around the South China Sea are likely to suffer from China's assertiveness in the near future. There is a need to maintain the military balance with China despite the size of their military budget. What should be done? Cooperation between Japan and India on defense is likely to play an important role in maintaining this balance.

2. What role could Japan-India strategic cooperation play in maintaining the regional military balance?

What is likely to be the nature of Japan-India strategic cooperation? There are three areas in particular where Japan-India cooperation can help maintain the military balance with China.

The linkage between the Indo-China border area and the East China Sea

First, the linkage between the Indo-China border area and the East China Sea is critical because India is also facing Chinese assertiveness, particularly in the Indo-China border area. In this area, it is understood that the military balance between India and China is changing because China's modernization of military infrastructure is quite rapid. Within 48 hours, Chinese armed forces can be ready for battle in the border area, whereas India needs one week for preparation because there are not enough roads on the Indian side.⁸ This means that India could find itself in the

⁷ Leon Panetta, "U.S. to deploy 60% of navy fleet to Pacific," BBC, June 2, 2012, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-18305750>.

⁸ Deeptiman Tiwary, "Chinese clearing forest cover to grab border land," *The Times of India*, August 26, 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-08-26/india/41453967_1_chinese-troops-incursion-sino-indian-border.

dangerous situation of facing Chinese forces over three times the size of its own forces in the border area.⁹

In the air, the situation is similar. In 2009, Air Chief Marshal P. V. Naik had accepted that India's "aircraft strength is inadequate and is just one third of China's air force."¹⁰ In addition, the possibility that China could use ballistic or cruise missiles to destroy Indian air bases must not be overlooked.

Along with China's rapid military modernization, its military activities have also been expanding. Since 2011, India has recorded more than 400 incursions every year. From April to May 2013, Chinese troops set up tents and stayed for about three weeks in Ladakh, inside India's border. In addition, China is deploying troops in Pakistan-administered Kashmir. Thus, it appears that Japan and India share a similar problem. Furthermore, because of their respective geographical locations on opposite sides of China, Japan-India cooperation can rectify their numerical inferiority. For example, if India were to cooperate with Japan, India would not need to face all of China's military at once because China would likely leave some of its forces in the east to protect against potential incursions from Japan, and vice versa.

By applying the technical knowledge of its high-end defense industry, Japan could support India's efforts to modernize its defenses in the Indo-China border area. Japan plans to invest in India's strategic road project in the Northeast region of India. By using these new roads, the Indian army could deploy more forces and supplies to the border area.

This road-building project is just the beginning. Japan's government is expected to ease regulations that restrict Japan's Official Development Assistance from being used to support military-related infrastructure projects. This could allow further support from Japan for India's future projects, like the construction of roads, tunnels, airports, and helipads of strategic importance.

India's rise relieves Japan and the United States of responsibilities in the Indian Ocean

Second, China has started to increase its military activities in the Indian Ocean. Since China is concerned about its dependence on SLOCs from the Middle East to China via the Strait of Malacca, it has tried to develop alternate routes through the Indian Ocean by way of the Middle East to Pakistan, and the Middle East to Myanmar.

Since the middle of the last decade, China's military activities in the Indian Ocean have been expanding. In 2012, at least 22 contacts were recorded with vessels suspected to be Chinese nuclear attack submarines patrolling the Indian Ocean. On December 3, 2013, the Foreign Affairs Office of China's Ministry of Defense informed India's military attaché in Beijing about a two-month-long nuclear submarine deployment.¹¹ The activities of these submarines suggest

⁹ Rajat Pandit, "India boring border tunnels to take on China, Pakistan," *The Times of India*, August 16, 2012, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2012-08-16/india/33232484_1_tunnels-rangpo-sikkim; Raful Singh, "India far behind China's combat power," *Hindustan Times*, December 12, 2013, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/india-far-behind-china-s-combat-power/article1-1161711.aspx>.

¹⁰ "IAF strength just one-third of China's: IAF chief," *The Times of India*, September 24, 2009, <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/IAF-strength-just-one-third-of-Chinas-IAF-chief/articleshow/5048190.cms>.

¹¹ "Chinese N-Sub Prowled Indian Ocean: Two-Month Patrol Demonstrated Glitch-Free Deployment," *Indian*

that the Chinese area of operation will expand because Chinese submarines can attack India's ballistic missile submarines and Indian Ocean SLOCs anytime they want.

In addition, China exports weapons to countries around India. Submarines play a particularly important role and have a profound impact on India's strategy. Bangladesh is set to import two submarines from China. Logically, the Indian Navy will need to have enough ships to keep a regular watch over the location and purpose of other countries' submarines. This means that these submarines will, to a great extent, regulate India's naval activities. In addition, the possibility that Pakistan may also possess nuclear submarines in its constant effort to counter India's rising power must not be overlooked. Further, because Pakistan does not have the technology, there is again a reasonable possibility that China will support "indigenous" nuclear submarine development as a counter to India.

The weak point in China's strategy is that it does not have any naval ports in this region. To rectify this shortcoming, under its "String of Pearls Strategy", China is investing in the development of Indian Ocean ports in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, and Myanmar. If the Chinese navy uses ports intended for civilian purposes as naval supply bases, China could overcome its lack of a ports in the region. For example, in 2014, at least two Chinese submarines and one submarine support-ship docked at a port in Sri Lanka.

Why has Chinese assertiveness in the Indian Ocean intensified?

Why is it that China has grown so assertive in the Indian Ocean lately? It is possible that the changing U.S.-China military balance has affected the situation. The United States has been influential in this region, especially since the 1970s. The United States has dispatched aircraft carrier battle groups several times in order to respond to regional conflicts, such as the third Indo-Pakistan War, the Gulf War, Operation Enduring Freedom, the Iraq War, and so forth. The United States uses the island of Diego Garcia as a hub to deploy military forces. In doing so, the United States continues to be the most powerful presence within the region. However, because U.S. naval power has been declining, China has been increasing naval activities in the Indian Ocean, just as it has done in the East and South China Seas. Thus, it is imperative that there be a strong country that can act as an alternative to fill the power vacuum in this region.

In accordance with Alfred Thayer Mahan's theory, there is a high probability that India will become the most influential sea power to fill this vacuum in the near future. Mahan pointed out six principles in his analysis of why Britain had become a sea power. The important factors he listed were: 1) geographical position; 2) physical conformation, especially, the length of coast line; 3) extent of territory, especially the balance between the extent of coastal line and military defense resources; 4) size of population, for working at sea; 5) character of the people; and 6) character of the government.¹²

First, India has an advantageous *geographical position* because the Indian subcontinent is separated from the Eurasian continent by high mountains. This advantage is also proven by historical fact. There are only three empires that dominated most of the sub-continent in Indian history: the Maurya Empire, the Mughal Empire, and the British Raj. The territories of these

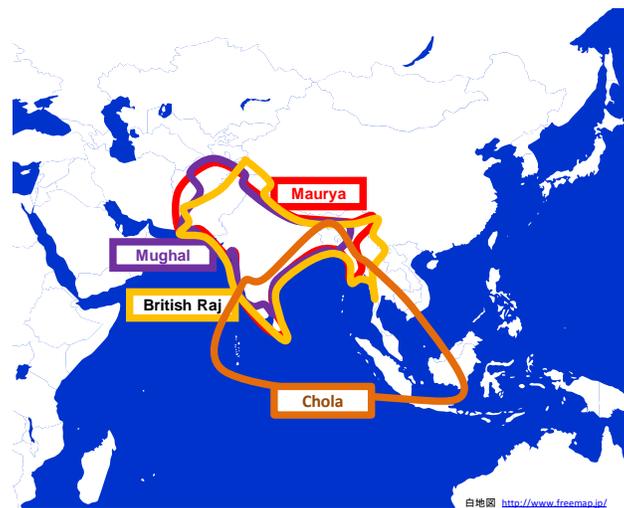
Military Review, Vol. 5, No.4, April 2014, 8.

¹² A. T. Mahan, *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1890).

three empires are very similar and the boundaries of all of their territories were delineated by the mountain ranges (Figure 4). In this way, the Indian sub-continent is a kind of island. This means India can concentrate on its naval forces, if it possesses the necessary will.

In addition, the history of the Cholas suggests another geographical advantage for India. Representatives of the Chola Empire, which was located in Southern India, made an expedition to Southeast Asia in the 11th century. The sphere of the Chola Empire's influence was expanded along the entire coastal area off the Bay of Bengal. This historical fact is another prominent example of India's geographical advantage. Since India is located at the northern center of the Indian Ocean, it is not only able to access Southeast Asia, but also all sides of the Indian Ocean, including the Middle East and East Africa.

Figure 4: Influential area of empires in the sub-continent¹³



India's *physical conformation* also makes it a candidate to be an influential sea power because India has 7,517 (6,100 mainland) kilometers of coastline. It also fits Mahan's third criteria: *extent of territory*. This is because there is a balance between India's coastal line and military defense resources. Presently, India is acquiring more than 100 warships. In the next ten years, India is planning to increase its number of warships from 136 to 200.¹⁴ There is also a possibility that India will possess three aircraft carrier battle groups and nine nuclear submarines by 2030.

India has roughly the fifth or sixth highest number of sailors at sea, consisting of 55,000 sailors employed in various countries. As such, India also satisfies the fourth condition: *size of population* for serving at sea. Based on the history of the Chola Empire, there is also a possibility that the *character of the people* in India could be sea-power oriented. When considered alongside the notion of the *character of the government*, one could contend that the Indian government is

¹³ Satoru Nagao, "The emerging India is not a threat. Why?: An assessment from Japan," *Asia Pacific Journal of Social Science*, Vol. III, Jul.-Dec. 2012, 99-109, http://203.200.1.30/CSIR_RootRepository/Content/Themes/Defence/DefenceHistory/HistoryofDefen/History/df%20history.pdf.

¹⁴ "Indian Navy to have 200 warships in next 10 years," *The Times of India*, November 13, 2013, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2013-11-13/india/44028232_1_ins-vikramaditya-navy-day-ins-khukri.

interested in expanding its sea power. The report “Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty First Century,” compiled based on discussions by many former Indian National Security Advisors, states that “presently, Indian military power has a continental orientation. Emerging as a maritime power should thus be India’s strategic objective.”¹⁵ As an indication of this shift towards maritime power, the share of India’s defense budget devoted to its navy has increased from 12.7% in 1990 to 17% in 2014.

Therefore, according to Mahan’s theory, India has sufficient potential to become a sea power. It also suggests that India could become an influential country in the Indian Ocean region. If India has the requisite will and capabilities, cooperation with India would contribute greatly to Japanese security. This is because Japan and its ally, the United States, would be able to relieve themselves from the burdens of safeguarding security in the Indian Ocean, and could deploy more military force in the East and South China Seas to maintain a military balance in Asia.

How would Japan-India defense cooperation contribute to security in the Indian Ocean?

If India becomes a sea power, how would Japan-India defense cooperation contribute to the Indian Ocean region? First, India could use Japanese technology to strengthen its own naval power. For example, as in the Indo-China border area, Japan is planning to assist with India’s airstrip project in the Andaman, Nicobar, and Lakshadweep Islands. If India could strengthen these bases, it would be relatively easy for it to project power into the Malacca Strait and the Indian Ocean.

Japan would also contribute to India’s ability to build warships, including aircraft carriers and submarines. Japan already possesses sophisticated helicopter carriers, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, and conventional submarines. Australia is considering acquisition of Japan’s *Soryu*-class submarine. After exporting submarines to countries like Australia, there is a possibility that Japan could also export them to other countries such as India. At present, India wants not only to get arms, but also to acquire the capacity to build systems at home under a “Made in India” policy. Nevertheless, shipbuilding cooperation between Japan and India should be a major initiative.

In addition to submarines, trade in other arms could be an important part of Japan-India strategic cooperation. It is well known that Japan and India are in negotiations over the exchange of US-2 rescue planes. These rescue planes can take off and land at sea. These planes can be used for rescue missions, and would establish a precedent for India’s presence in the region. For example, if India deploys the US-2 for rescue missions or disaster management in other countries, this will be perceived as a marker of India’s will to extend tangible support to those in need and thus expand India’s presence. As a result, India’s image would improve and India could expand its influence in these countries. From the viewpoint of Japan, this plane could be a very useful political tool in its relations with India.

However, the US-2 is just the beginning of potential arms exchanges between the two countries. Japan has a wide array of sophisticated technologies and expertise. For example, to protect India’s aircraft carrier, India needs to deal with China’s anti-ship ballistic missiles, which can strike at any time. This means that India needs a sea-based missile defense system. Now, under a Japan-U.S. joint development project, Japan is developing some of the most important

¹⁵ Sunil Khilnani et al., “Nonalignment 2.0: A Foreign and Strategic Policy for India in the Twenty-first Century,” 2012, 38, http://www.cprindia.org/sites/default/files/NonAlignment%202.0_1.pdf.

parts of this sea-based missile defense system. With this cutting edge technology, Japan and India, with the United States as a partner, could cooperate in the missile defense sector.

Minesweepers are also important tools for India to employ in order to face Chinese submarines and sea mines. Japan has expertise and equipment removing sea mines. Japan has continued to sweep World War II sea mines over 65 years after the war. For example, Japan participated in minesweeping operations during the Korean War. In 1991, Japan sent minesweepers to deal with mines after the Gulf War. As a result, under the Japan-U.S. alliance, the United States now relies on these Japanese minesweepers. Japan is proud of its world-class expertise and equipment. If India needs to remove sea mines put in place by Chinese submarines, Japan and India could share their skills and equipment. Therefore, Japan-India strategic cooperation could be effective in managing China's naval activities in the Indian Ocean.

In addition, Japan-India cooperation would be useful in the countries surrounding India. China has invested huge sums of money to build infrastructure and expand its influence in India's neighboring countries. If India does not possess enough resources and technology, China might increase its influence in the Indian Ocean region and damage the image of India as the sole great power in the region. Cooperation with Japan could rectify India's numerical inferiority. If India's knowledge in South Asia and Japan's budget and technology could be combined, this would consolidate India's influence in the region.

Japan and India can collaborate to support countries around the South China Sea

Because China's military power is far bigger than those of other countries around the South China Sea, Southeast Asian countries need to integrate their policies and bolster their military strength by obtaining military support from a trustworthy partner. In this case as well, Japan-India strategic cooperation will be useful.

India has already started to support armed forces in Southeast Asia as a part of its "Look East Policy." India has trained the crew of Thailand's aircraft carrier, the crews of submarines and fighter pilots in Vietnam, and fighter pilots and crews in Malaysia. Further, India has agreed to train pilots and provide maintenance for fighter planes of the Indonesian Air Force. Singapore also uses India's land and air bases for their training.

Although it has not supported armed forces in Southeast Asia, Japan has long provided security equipment, including anti-piracy systems, tsunami warning systems, cyber defense systems, and infrastructure like airfields and ports. These systems are indirectly related to maritime security in the South China Sea. In addition, under Prime Minister Abe, Japan has begun donating arms to these countries. For example, Japan is donating patrol ships to Vietnam and the Philippines.

Thus, if Japan and India collaborate with each other, they can better support countries around the South China Sea. For example, if Japan was to build an airport in Vietnam and the Indian Air Force was to train Vietnam's fighter pilots, Vietnam would be able to receive the benefits of both an airport and fighter pilot training. As this example illustrates, Japan-India-Vietnam cooperation can create a win-win-win situation.

To achieve this goal, what kind of systems ought to be established? In January 2014, when Prime Minister Abe visited New Delhi, he and Prime Minister Modi "welcomed the launch

of a bilateral dialogue on ASEAN affairs.”¹⁶ The hope is that the dialogue will promote a more practical trilateral strategic dialogue that includes Japan, India, and other nations. Examples of possible trilateral dialogues include: Japan, India, and Vietnam; Japan, India, and the Philippines; Japan, India, and Singapore; and others. Through such dialogue, Japan and India can share information, better identify the needs of these Southeast Asian countries, and decide how best to cooperate with or support these countries.

3. Will India become a trustworthy security partner for the Japan-U.S. alliance?

If Japan-India cooperation allows the two nations to fill the power vacuum in the region, one question will still remain: Will India be a trustworthy security partner for Japan and the United States? If India challenges the status quo in the same way China does, India will not become a trustworthy partner to Japan. However, there are three reasons why India will likely be a trustworthy partner.

India is a democratic country

First, for Japan and the United States, a democratic country is more trustworthy because freedom of expression helps build confidence between countries. When governments and experts try to understand the military strategy of other countries, they can obtain accurate information not only by reading official documents but also by exchanging opinions with experts in and out of other governments. However, when Chinese experts are asked about matters relating to defense, their replies are the same as official views. They are not permitted the same latitude to have differing views on such matters. The lack of critical thinking in China raises fears among neighboring countries about China’s real intentions.

On the other hand, there is no such regulation in India. For example, in 2005, a BBC survey in India showed that only 1% of Indians trusted the politicians they elected.¹⁷ Although this is not a positive indicator, it is symbolic of the fact that anybody can voice their complaints freely. As a result, most countries in the world can place greater trust in India because their opinions are expressed in a free and democratic environment.

India will not challenge the status quo in South Asia

Second, there is a high probability that India will not challenge the status quo in South Asia. To understand this, we need to consider why India’s use of military force toward neighboring countries is relatively self-restrained. Below is a list of India’s military operations since its independence. This list provides evidence that most of India’s operations have been *reactive* and that the Indian Army has not crossed any border since 1972, except for the purposes of peacekeeping or peace-building operations (even though the intervention in Sri Lanka was a relatively big operation, the main purpose of this operation was peacekeeping). In addition, in 2014 India also accepted a United Nations tribunal ruled in favor of Bangladesh regarding the India-Bangladesh sea boundary dispute. India’s restrained use of force has been demonstrated consistently (as shown in Table 1).

¹⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs “Japan-India Joint Statement: Intensifying the Strategic and Global Partnership,” January 25, 2014, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000025064.pdf>.

¹⁷ “Pakistanis ‘put religion first,’” *BBC*, September 15, 2005, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/4246054.stm.

Table 1: List of India's military operations¹⁸

	Active or Reactive	Type of Operation	Area of operation
Junagadh (1947)	Active	Limited war	Outside
India-Pakistan (1947-48)	Reactive	Limited war	Outside
Hyderabad (1948)	Active	Limited war	Outside
Northeast (1956-now)	Reactive	Counterinsurgency	Inside
Goa (1961)	Active	Limited war	Outside
India-China (1962)	Reactive	Limited war	Inside
Kutch (1965)	Reactive	Limited war	Inside
India-Pakistan (1965)	Reactive	Limited war	Outside
Nathu La & Chola (1967)	Reactive	Limited war	Inside
Maoist (1967-now)	Reactive	Counterinsurgency	Inside
India-Pakistan (1971)	Active	Limited war	Outside
Siachen (1984)	Active	Limited war	Inside
Falcon & Checkerboard (1986-87)	Reactive	Coercive diplomacy	Inside
Punjab (1984-92)	Reactive	Counterinsurgency	Inside
Brasstack (1987)	Active	Coercive diplomacy	Inside
Sri Lanka (1987-90)	Active	Peace building	Outside
Maldives (1988)	Reactive	Peace building	Outside
Kashmir (1989-now)	Reactive	Counterinsurgency	Inside
1990 Crisis (1990)	Reactive	Coercive diplomacy	Inside
Kargil (1999)	Reactive	Limited war	Inside
Parakram (2001-02)	Reactive	Coercive diplomacy	Inside
UNPKO	Reactive	Peacekeeping	Outside

¹⁸ Nagao, 99-109. In this list, I have evaluated India's military operations based on three categories. The first category is 'Active' or 'Reactive,' referring to which party sent combat troops first, India or its opposition. Second are the five types of operations, 'Limited war' (the probability of total wars seems to have decreased after World War II, so most wars are limited wars), 'Coercive diplomacy' (a kind of diplomatic persuasion using military intimidation for diplomatic purposes that is not war or deterrence. In a war, one country compels its opponent by using military operations. In coercive diplomacy, one attempts to persuade the opponent. "Whereas deterrence represents an effort to dissuade an opponent from undertaking an action that has not yet been initiated, coercive diplomacy attempts to reverse actions which have already been undertaken by an adversary." Gordon A. Craig and Alexander L. George, *Force and Statecraft: Diplomatic Problems of Our Times*, Third Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 196. 'Peace building' (forceful operations for peacekeeping), 'Peacekeeping' (military operations based on the agreement of all warring parties), and "Counterinsurgency" (domestic operations to maintain law and order). Third is the 'area of operation,' which refers to 'Inside' or 'Outside' of India.

Why has India's foreign policy been termed "strategic restraint", and why is it viewed so generously by other countries? If we focus on the power balance in South Asia, we find one fitting explanation. Because India has long been the only great power in South Asia, there are not enough benefits for India to enjoy by bullying smaller neighbors. Since the 1971 Indo-Pakistan war, India has maintained a gross domestic product that is more than seven times larger than that of Pakistan.¹⁹ Currently, about 80% of total defense spending in South Asia is spent by India alone. If India were to attack its smaller neighbors and win, India would only realize marginal benefits at best, because the size of its potential opponents is far smaller than India. Instead of bullying its neighbors, India has shown a generous attitude by persuading them to cooperate. This is the kind of foreign policy strategy expected from a great leader in South Asia. Such generosity in turn encourages Japan to trust India as a leading country that will not challenge the status quo in South Asia. Simply put, India's attitude and behavior towards South Asia is not the same as China's attitude in the western Pacific.

Experience with international cooperation

Third, international cooperation inevitably leads to greater Indian influence, since the country has long-term experience with international joint military operations. Why is international cooperation so important for an influential country? When we think about who should be the leader of a group of nations, those from democratic countries emphasize the importance of leaders who are democratically elected. Leaders are supposed to care for their constituents. Any influential country that approaches problems by using multi-national cooperation faces a similar situation; it needs to care for supporting countries. The experience gained through participation in various multi-national operations contributes to a country's acquisition of the knowledge required to become influential.

The Indian Army homepage, for example, states that "The Indian Army's participation in the UN peacekeeping operations spans a period of 57 years, covering 43 UN Missions in which over ninety-thousand Indian soldiers served in various parts of the world... Indian troops have taken part in some of the most difficult operations, and have suffered casualties in the service of the UN."²⁰

Anti-piracy measures and joint exercises also indicate India's collaboration with other military organizations for achieving objectives. For example, India organized the multilateral joint exercise *Miran*. There are also annual joint exercises or joint patrols with Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia. There have been more than 60 joint India-U.S. exercises over the previous decade. Japan and India have also implemented six joint exercises so far.

Military capacity-building measures are another form of international cooperation. The support India has provided to Southeast Asian nations has already been discussed. Additionally, many foreign students from coastal countries in the Indian Ocean, such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Myanmar, Singapore, Oman, and others, study at various military schools

¹⁹ "Home Maddison," <http://www.ggd.net/MADDISON/oriindex.htm>.

²⁰ "Official Website of the Indian Army," Official Website of the Indian Army, <http://indianarmy.nic.in/Site/FormTemplate/frmTempSimple.aspx?MnId=e40A2YG3r3hzP0xjK/4HmA==&ParentID=q+ZAdzxF3BlnESzGMYNUQg==&flag=tg4Ra01CaeT2XFy40ByUXQ==>.

in India. India has already given and is planning to give more patrol vessels and planes to the Maldives, Seychelles, and Mauritius, along with relevant training courses.

The experience gained through multi-national operations, including peacekeeping operations, joint exercises, and military capacity-building, contributes to India's acquisition of the expertise that will allow it to become an influential country in this region.

4. Conclusion: Japan-India relations will be a key factor in the Japan-U.S. alliance

To summarize, China's assertiveness has worsened due to the changing power balance in Asia. In response, Japan has adopted a balancing policy. Under such circumstances, there are many areas in which Japan and India can cooperate to mitigate this situation. In addition, Japan is now seeking greater cooperation with India because India has the potential to become a trustworthy security partner for the Japan-U.S. alliance.

Further analysis is required to determine what Japan's role in U.S.-India relations should be. Based on the above analysis, it appears that Japan-U.S.-India cooperation will be beneficial for all parties. Japan's role is especially important, however. In the context of historical experience, many uncertainties remain between the United States and India. For the United States, Pakistan has been an important partner in dealing with Islamic extremism. However, India is not comfortable with U.S. support to Pakistan. At the same time, the United States is concerned about India's independent foreign policy. India cooperates not only with the United States, but also with Russia. Thus, despite the fact that both countries share similar views of China and have democratic systems, there are nonetheless some uncertainties between them. In the worst case scenario, the United States and India might need another country to play the kind of role that Pakistan played in the 1970s, when Pakistan maintained good relations with both the United States and China, facilitating U.S. cooperation with China in order to contain the Soviet Union.

Japan can credibly fill that role and rectify those uncertainties today. Japan has been a trustworthy U.S. ally for more than 60 years. Meanwhile, Japan-India relations have been progressing steadily as well. This means that Japan is considered a reliable partner for both the United States and India. If the United States and India face problems or tensions with each other, Japan can put its congenial relations with both the United States and India to use to act as a messenger or mediator between them. In addition, Japan is still an influential country with highly advanced technologies and the financial power necessary to enhance the efficacy of trilateral cooperation. As such, good and stable trilateral Japan-U.S.-India relations are an optimal strategic arrangement for both the United States and India. The time has come to proactively further this trilateral cooperation to ensure peace and stability in Asia.