

India-Japan Relations

An Agenda for Convergence

Rahul TRIPATHI

Rahul TRIPATHI. インドと日本の関係:注目すべき課題. *Studies in International Relations* Vol. 24, No. 3, December 2003, pp. 21 - 39

インドと日本は、今日、それぞれの国の外交政策の方向という点で極めて重要な局面を迎えている。この15年間に見られた世界の地政学的なシナリオの劇的な変化と、絶えず変化している国内の政治・経済上の必須課題のために、こうした世界の変貌のなかで自国がどうあるべきかの再検討が両国で強いられているのである。経済成長と発展へのそれぞれの進路を再考する必要性が痛感されるとともに、お互いの国が過去50年間にわたって抱いてきた世界に対する見方の見直しも求められている。このことは、両国の二国間関係のあり方にも影響するものである。両国の関係は、ときおり冷却することはあったにしても、前向きに推移してきた。ただし、親密至極な関係を結ぶということもなかった。当論文は、この変化してやまない時代におけるインドと日本の二国間関係の位置を定め、その関係をより高いレベルに、つまり、日印関係がアジア地域と世界の変化の結果ではなく、そうした変化の重要な決定要因であると考えられるほどのレベルに高める可能性を探る試みであり、両国がお互いの提携関係を新しい高みに押し上げることを可能にする合意点を見いだすための課題を概略説明しようとする試みである。

Introduction

The global economic and political environment which has been unfolding in the recent years has necessitated a review of foreign policy orientations of a number of countries of developing as well as

the developed world alike. In the economic sphere, with the collapse of the socialist model, state led planned economic interventions have given way to the market driven impulses that nations need to respond to in order to become part of the rapidly globalizing world economy. While the developed capitalist societies are forced to think of ways to make their economies resistant to the 'boom' and 'bust' syndrome that has been the hallmark of the global economy, for the developing ones, it is the agenda of opening up to respond to the challenges and opportunities that such a world provides that demands attention. In the political sphere, the transformation has been no less challenging. With the demise of bipolarity and the specter of unipolarity looming large at the global stage, countries across the world are forced to do a reassessment of their linkages and partnerships on the basis of mutually acceptable goals. They seek new alliances based on pragmatism which might replace earlier alliances developed on a certain idealism, depending on what their respective national interests were.

A study of India-Japan relations in these changing times offers a unique opportunity to understand how two nations, starting their post-war nation building projects on totally different premises, based their relationship on a certain consensus that overrode any conflict. At the same time however, this consensus was never strong enough to catapult the relationship to a high domain which could open the vistas of a 'global partnership' a term which has been refashioned in the last couple of years in the context of bilateral relationship. Today both India and Japan find themselves at critical positions in the global geopolitical and geo-economic scenario. India with a decade

of economic reforms behind and showing promise in emerging areas of information technology seeks partners which can complement its capabilities to become a global player. At the same time India seeks global support on its position relating to matters of national and international security. Japan, despite the recent years of recession continues to be a leading global industrial player and is in a position to provide its expertise based on long years of experience. More significantly, as Japan seeks a more pro-active foreign policy with regard to its immediate threats, it would also look forward to a greater global endorsement of its positions on matters of national interest.

In this context can India and Japan place their foreign policy orientation at levels where both can find increasing areas of convergence? In order to address this question it is important to place the larger context of the relationship based on history, analyze the nature of relationship that exists at present and then try to outline an agenda for future.

The Early Years

The starting point of diplomatic engagement between India and Japan began in the early fifties with the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries on April 28th, 1952. This was a period of remarkable challenge for both the countries. India, having gained independence five years ago was trying to embark on the path of nation building based on the overarching agenda of social and economic upliftment of multitude of its people long suppressed under the colonial rule. At the same time at the global level, it was trying

to articulate the collective concerns of erstwhile colonial and developing countries to create an international order based on equity and justice. Japan too, was a nation trying to come to terms with the challenge of post war reconstruction as the only country to have suffered the horrors of the nuclear bomb. It was indeed a testing time for the people of both the countries which were known for their past glory. The desire to chalk a path of national development overcoming the obstacles of the past was a mutual one, though the path the two nations selected were different ones as we shall elaborate a little later.

The formal opening of diplomatic ties was done against the backdrop of some of the very positive post-war experiences that the two countries shared with each other. One of the most prominent one was the dissenting judgement of Indian Judge Radha Binod Pal at the Tokyo International War Crime Tribunal in favour of Japan. The trials contained some charges that had no legal precedent prior to the end of the second world war, (Hoffman, 1998 p.268). India also chose to waive all claims for war reparations, dissociating itself with the San Francisco Peace Treaty and signed a separate peace treaty with Japan instead, (Ministry of External Affairs, MEA web). This was the first treaty Japan signed with a country as an independent nation. In a way, India and Japan were reasserting their ties by building up on the long years of historical and cultural association which had been interspersed with the unfortunate period of colonialism and world war.

Despite the commonality of interest and the history of cultural association however, both the countries saw themselves pursuing

different paths for national consolidation. This was motivated to a large extent by the differing geopolitical environment in which the two countries situated themselves. In order to retain independence of judgement and be able to seek the attention of both the capitalist and the communist bloc alike, India adopted the policy of non-alignment. This appeared to be a pragmatic decision at the time, as given the enormous challenges that lay ahead in the path of national development, India could not afford to take sides in a world which was increasingly getting divided on the basis of ideological rivalry. It needed to have the support of all without compromising with its basic commitment of creating a global order based on equity and justice. Japan on the other hand adopted a unique 'war renouncing constitution' which forever gave up war as an instrument of foreign policy. This was done as the United States and Japan entered a treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security whereby the U.S. promised to defend Japan from outside attack. For a nation which faced the huge task of post war reconstruction, this gave an opportunity to focus its creative energies on economic development without being constrained by requirements of a defense build-up. This was the essence of the 'Yoshida Doctrine' attributed to former Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida, also known as the architect of post war Japan's foreign policy, (Inoguchi, 1991, p 45).

The early years of India-Japan interaction were therefore characterized by two nations sharing a common yearning for national consolidation yet not having a common ground for an enhanced bilateral build-up. It was often found that communication in mutually comprehensible terms was often missing and there was often lack

of response to moves by the other. Analysts have pointed out that while Japan saw India as a symbol of resurgent Asia and sought friendship for building better Asia, the latter was lukewarm in its response, probably mindful of the Japan-United States alliance, (P.A.N. Murthy, 1992). The context in which the two nations pursued their national objectives were different and so were the meeting points which could bring them together. This is evident from the fact that it took almost five years since the beginning of diplomatic relations for the first ever Prime Ministerial visit to take place from either sides, (**Embassy of Japan in India**). Such high level visits were mainly once a decade phenomenon and after 1961, the next visit of the Japanese prime minister was to take place only after twenty three years, with the Indian Prime Minister visiting twice during the period. The top level exchanges were maintained at the level of foreign ministers who had periodic meetings among them, (**Embassy of Japan**). Nevertheless the period marked the strengthening of the formal cultural and commercial interaction between the two countries with the signing of a host of treaties which included among others:

Treaty of Peace between Japan and India (1952)

Agreement between Japan and India for Air Service (1956)

Cultural Agreement between Japan and India (1956)

Agreement on Commerce between Japan and India (1958)

Agreement between Japan and India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation in respect of Taxes on Income (1960).

Significantly, India was the first country to receive the Japanese Yen loan assistance in 1958 and Japan was to become the largest bilateral donor to India in the later years as its Official Development Assistance (ODA) expanded to cover a wide range of areas including

health, power sector, afforestation, preservation of cultural heritage etc.

A Stable Engagement

The decades following the establishment of diplomatic arrangement saw the bilateral relations settling in a well defined pattern. With Japan's dramatic rise as an economic power and India's faltering attempts at maintaining economic growth while experimenting with mixed economy model, the relationship turned more into a donor-recipient paradigm. Rather than any significant cultural or political engagement driving the relationship further, it was the economic relationship between the two that was to set the agenda for bilateral relations.

Over the years, Japan became the second largest destination of Indian exports which included gems, marine products, iron ore and cotton yarn. India also became a major importer from Japan as the major imports included machinery, plant related products, transport equipment, electronic machinery etc. This pattern continued even after India initiated drastic economic reform measures in 1991 which led to opening up of the market by removing import restrictions and creation of a more favourable environment for foreign investment. Japan was India's third largest trading partner in the year 2001-2002 after the United States and European Union. The two way trade during the year was \$3.54 billion of which Indian exports comprised \$1.5 billion. However, there was a decline in the absolute value of trade from 1996-97 to 2001-02 from \$4.1 billion to \$3.54 billion. The major items of India's export to Japan during this period were marine

of response to moves by the other. Analysts have pointed out that while Japan saw India as a symbol of resurgent Asia and sought friendship for building better Asia, the latter was lukewarm in its response, probably mindful of the Japan-United States alliance, (P.A.N. Murthy, 1992). The context in which the two nations pursued their national objectives were different and so were the meeting points which could bring them together. This is evident from the fact that it took almost five years since the beginning of diplomatic relations for the first ever Prime Ministerial visit to take place from either sides, (**Embassy of Japan in India**). Such high level visits were mainly once a decade phenomenon and after 1961, the next visit of the Japanese prime minister was to take place only after twenty three years, with the Indian Prime Minister visiting twice during the period. The top level exchanges were maintained at the level of foreign ministers who had periodic meetings among them, (**Embassy of Japan**). Nevertheless the period marked the strengthening of the formal cultural and commercial interaction between the two countries with the signing of a host of treaties which included among others:

Treaty of Peace between Japan and India (1952)

Agreement between Japan and India for Air Service (1956)

Cultural Agreement between Japan and India (1956)

Agreement on Commerce between Japan and India (1958)

Agreement between Japan and India for the Avoidance of Double Taxation in respect of Taxes on Income (1960).

Significantly, India was the first country to receive the Japanese Yen loan assistance in 1958 and Japan was to become the largest bilateral donor to India in the later years as its Official Development Assistance (ODA) expanded to cover a wide range of areas including

health, power sector, afforestation, preservation of cultural heritage etc.

A Stable Engagement

The decades following the establishment of diplomatic arrangement saw the bilateral relations settling in a well defined pattern. With Japan's dramatic rise as an economic power and India's faltering attempts at maintaining economic growth while experimenting with mixed economy model, the relationship turned more into a donor-recipient paradigm. Rather than any significant cultural or political engagement driving the relationship further, it was the economic relationship between the two that was to set the agenda for bilateral relations.

Over the years, Japan became the second largest destination of Indian exports which included gems, marine products, iron ore and cotton yarn. India also became a major importer from Japan as the major imports included machinery, plant related products, transport equipment, electronic machinery etc. This pattern continued even after India initiated drastic economic reform measures in 1991 which led to opening up of the market by removing import restrictions and creation of a more favourable environment for foreign investment. Japan was India's third largest trading partner in the year 2001-2002 after the United States and European Union. The two way trade during the year was \$3.54 billion of which Indian exports comprised \$1.5 billion. However, there was a decline in the absolute value of trade from 1996-97 to 2001-02 from \$4.1 billion to \$3.54 billion. The major items of India's export to Japan during this period were marine

products (28%), diamonds, gems and jewellery (26%), textile products (12%) and minerals including iron ore (10%). The other items include garment, tea, cut flowers, spices, chemicals, bulk drugs, computer software, leather goods etc. (MEA)

Japan's position as a foreign investor however was much below being the seventh largest direct investor in India in 1995 after United States, Israel, Malaysia, Thailand, Mauritius and the United Kingdom. Nevertheless its direct investment in India increased almost fivefold between the period 1991-1995. (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan, MOFA). This is significant, considering the fact that the period coincided with the growing recession in the Japanese economy. The cumulative approval of Japanese foreign direct investment in India by 2002 was around \$3.1 billion. The actual inflow of the Japanese investment in India during this time after almost a decade of economic reform was around \$1.2 billion showing a considerable gap between approvals and actuals. The sectors where most of this investment has gone include transportation (28%), telecommunications (18%), fuel (13.5%), chemicals (12.17%) and trading (6.9%). Apart from this, there are a number of Japanese technical collaborations which account for nearly seven percent of all technical collaborations in India. These are concentrated mainly in the areas of electrical industry (26%), transportation (24%), industrial machinery (6%) and metallurgy (5%), (MEA).

Another important area of bilateral interaction has been the official aid India has received from Japan for the last four decades, after becoming the first recipient of yen assistance in 1958. The aid usually

covered a wide range of areas relating to social and economic welfare. Japan was the largest bilateral donor to India during the period 1986-1998. The total Japanese aid commitment during this period increased three times. After a brief interruption in 1998 following India's nuclear explosions this trend resumed, thereby showing the continuing commitment of Japan to the economic and social development of India. In the recent times, four priority areas have been mutually identified for Official Development Assistance (ODA). These include Infrastructure Development, Environment Conservation, Poverty Alleviation and Rural Development. Among some of the recent initiatives of official assistance include the proposals for projects to clean up river Ganga and Yamuna and the ongoing Delhi Metro Rail project which is being built with the Japanese ODA of 50,151 million yen (around Rs. 2,090 crore). For the latter project, three tranches of loans have already been extended-14,760 million yen in 1997, 6,732 million yen in 2001 and 28,659 million yen in 2002. (Japan Calling p.3) The project is a shining example of Indo-Japanese collaboration as seven major technical and corporate houses of Japan are keenly interacting with their Indian counterparts. In addition, to these mega projects, Japan has also been involved with a number of grassroots projects in India. The scheme of 'Grant Assistance to Grassroots Projects' (GAGP) is an important part of Japanese ODA to India. Under this scheme, Japan recently offered a grant assistance package of US\$ 564,959 (around Rs. 2.65 crore) to ten Indian Non Governmental Organizations to assist in their grassroots projects. (Japan Calling p.4). These projects cover a wide range from health, sanitation, water, environment and youth.

Thus the pattern of economic interaction between the two countries has been determined by the three principle areas of trade, aid and investment in which Japan as one of the advanced industrial countries of the world has helped a developing country like India to build up its economic and social infrastructure. It is significant to point out that such economic relationship has stood the test of times, overcoming the occasional periods of tension (elaborated in the next section) that affected the relationship between the two countries. It is exactly this resilience which provides room for optimism to create a stronger basis of partnership for future.

Testing Times

It has been pointed out by observers of Indo-Japan relations that despite the goodwill and harmony that existed between the two countries in the years following opening of diplomatic relations, there was no conscious effort to build up on the sentiments. The compulsions of cold war and India's own inward economic orientation were designated as the critical factors hindering greater buildup, (Jaishankar, 2000). At the other level, it appeared that the relations between two countries, free from any kind of dispute or tension, automatically provided a framework where critical situations may be met with adequate responses. It would not be wrong to say that never before in the relationship was a chance to test what the intrinsic strengths of the relationship were.

The first significant instance to test the strength of relationship came in 1998 when India exploded nuclear devices, in a marked departure of its earlier policy of nuclear restraint after the first explosion in 1974.

India stated the reasons for going nuclear despite its principled position in the past. It felt that the nuclear weapons states were repeatedly going back on their commitment to establish a nuclear weapons free world and were trying to perpetuate the disparity between nuclear haves and have-nots by insisting on discriminatory treaties like Non Proliferation Treaty and Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Besides India's immediate neighborhood with two nuclear rivals was making its own position insecure.

However, these arguments were not taken well by the leading powers of the Group of Eight of which Japan is a key member. Predictably enough, member countries imposed tough economic sanctions on India. Japan's reaction too, on expected lines was extremely harsh. It announced economic measures in two stages which included freezing of grant aid for new projects(except for emergency, humanitarian and grassroots assistance), suspension of yen loans for new projects, withdrawal of Tokyo as a venue for the India Development forum, a 'cautious examination' of loans to India by international financial institutions and imposition of strict control over technology transfers, (Jaishankar, 2000). This was in tune with Japan's ODA charter as per which aid to the recipients is evaluated on the basis of their defense and military spending and their activities relating to nuclear proliferation. (Altbach, 1998)

Given Japan's moral position against nuclear weapons and tests, such an action was understandable. But it adopted a more strident posture by taking up the initiative to set up a South Asia Task Force to jointly pressurize India and Pakistan and introduced with other

nations UN Security Council Resolution 1172 deploring nuclear tests by two countries and asking them to unconditionally sign the NPT and the CTBT. Moreover, it also sought to increasingly bring the contentious issue of Jammu and Kashmir to the forefront of global agenda, describing it as the root cause of nuclear tests. (Jaishankar, 2000). It was quite clear that Japan was for the first time taking a pro-active stance on an issue which was bound to affect a lot of sensitivities in India.

Therefore the period in the aftermath of the Indian nuclear tests was a critical time for the bilateral relationship. From the Japanese point of view, the tests were an indication of flouting the norms of global non proliferation that had been devised over the years. It envisaged the Indian actions as leading to a counter reaction not only in the Indian subcontinent, but also in its own neighborhood where a potential nuclear rival in North Korea could adopt a more aggressive posture. Above all, Indian actions seemed to negate the very basic philosophy of pacifism and non-aggression that Japan had assiduously promoted as part of its post war resurgence. As the only country that had suffered the horrors of a nuclear attack, its position was well placed. According to the Indian perception however, the tests were symbolic of the protest over the discriminatory order which the nuclear haves had created. They used the global non proliferation regimes such as NPT to encourage vertical proliferation without even paying a lip service to the eventual task of total nuclear disarmament which such regimes themselves stipulated. This larger context coupled with the security threats from the immediate neighborhood were given as the underlying reasons for going nuclear.

India's actions immediately after the conduct of nuclear tests such as a unilateral declaration of the no first use and a freeze on further testing did not appear to mollify the global sentiment. The position started changing gradually by 1999 as the sanctions were not having the desired results and India entered into a series of negotiations with the United States over non proliferation. There was a gradual softening of the position of the G8 as well. The momentum in India-Japan relations also gradually picked up as the Japanese State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Mr Ichita Yamamoto visited India in October 1999, marking the first political level visit after the nuclear tests. This was followed by the visit of then Indian Foreign Minister Mr Jaswant Singh, which was seen a normalization of bilateral relations. A significant area agreed upon during the visit was that of opening a security dialogue while continuing cultural, scientific and student level exchanges. (MEA) It did appear that the relations between two countries, marred temporarily by the events in 1998, were gradually being put back on track. It was certainly an indication of the relationship finding new grounds, having gone through one of the most difficult periods in the generally tension free engagement of the two countries in the past.

Future Engagement

Given the historical context and the recent history of India-Japan relations, the task of delineating the terms of future engagement between the two countries becomes a challenging yet opportune endeavor. It is quite clear, that if the relationship has to be taken at a different (higher) pedestal, there are certain elements of complementarity that have to be delineated. In other words, the relationship has

nations UN Security Council Resolution 1172 deploring nuclear tests by two countries and asking them to unconditionally sign the NPT and the CTBT. Moreover, it also sought to increasingly bring the contentious issue of Jammu and Kashmir to the forefront of global agenda, describing it as the root cause of nuclear tests. (Jaishankar, 2000). It was quite clear that Japan was for the first time taking a pro-active stance on an issue which was bound to affect a lot of sensitivities in India.

Therefore the period in the aftermath of the Indian nuclear tests was a critical time for the bilateral relationship. From the Japanese point of view, the tests were an indication of flouting the norms of global non proliferation that had been devised over the years. It envisaged the Indian actions as leading to a counter reaction not only in the Indian subcontinent, but also in its own neighborhood where a potential nuclear rival in North Korea could adopt a more aggressive posture. Above all, Indian actions seemed to negate the very basic philosophy of pacifism and non-aggression that Japan had assiduously promoted as part of its post war resurgence. As the only country that had suffered the horrors of a nuclear attack, its position was well placed. According to the Indian perception however, the tests were symbolic of the protest over the discriminatory order which the nuclear haves had created. They used the global non proliferation regimes such as NPT to encourage vertical proliferation without even paying a lip service to the eventual task of total nuclear disarmament which such regimes themselves stipulated. This larger context coupled with the security threats from the immediate neighborhood were given as the underlying reasons for going nuclear.

India's actions immediately after the conduct of nuclear tests such as a unilateral declaration of the no first use and a freeze on further testing did not appear to mollify the global sentiment. The position started changing gradually by 1999 as the sanctions were not having the desired results and India entered into a series of negotiations with the United States over non proliferation. There was a gradual softening of the position of the G8 as well. The momentum in India-Japan relations also gradually picked up as the Japanese State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Mr Ichita Yamamoto visited India in October 1999, marking the first political level visit after the nuclear tests. This was followed by the visit of then Indian Foreign Minister Mr Jaswant Singh, which was seen a normalization of bilateral relations. A significant area agreed upon during the visit was that of opening a security dialogue while continuing cultural, scientific and student level exchanges. (MEA) It did appear that the relations between two countries, marred temporarily by the events in 1998, were gradually being put back on track. It was certainly an indication of the relationship finding new grounds, having gone through one of the most difficult periods in the generally tension free engagement of the two countries in the past.

Future Engagement

Given the historical context and the recent history of India-Japan relations, the task of delineating the terms of future engagement between the two countries becomes a challenging yet opportune endeavor. It is quite clear, that if the relationship has to be taken at a different (higher) pedestal, there are certain elements of complementarity that have to be delineated. In other words, the relationship has

to move beyond the donor-recipient paradigm which has been the guiding theme for the last four decades or so. The important question in this context would be whether India and Japan are in a position to contribute to this complementarity in their individual and collective capacities. The answer to this question lies to a great extent in the respective geopolitical and economic situation in which both the countries find themselves today.

Before addressing the issue, it is important to take a closer look at the nature and intensity of interaction that has taken place between the two countries in the recent years. Although the 'economic measures' introduced by Japan after Indian nuclear tests were taken back in October 2001(ostensibly because of changing security environment post September11), the highest-level political interaction had already started almost a year back. The Japanese Prime Minister visited India in August 2000, the first such visit since 1990. The most significant aspect of the visit was the proposal by the Japanese Prime Minister of initiating a 'Global Partnership between Japan and India in the 21st Century'. For bilateral relations which just two years back seemed threatened by mutually divergent positions on critical issues, such a statement was a defining moment indeed, even if the broad contours of this partnership were yet to be defined.

The summit meeting discussed a whole range of issues relating to bilateral relations, nuclear non proliferation, reform of the U.N Security Council, situation within South Asia and many other related concerns. On the nuclear question, both sides found a common ground on issues of non proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Both

sides agreed on the need for expansion of the security council consisting of both developed and developing countries by promoting a wider debate on the issue. The Japanese Prime Minister also emphasised on the need for greater dialogue between India and Pakistan and underscored the importance of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in stability and development of the South Asian region. A significant initiative agreed upon was the establishment of a Japan -India Eminent Person's Committee to suggest areas for future interaction. (MOFA)

The context of the visit of the Japanese Prime Minister and the vision he outlined for a future partnership with India was significant. The expected 'Global Partnership' was to be based on twin structures of strategic convergences and economic complementarities. It was quite clear that such a relation would perceive the future course of interactions on a mutually acceptable basis where both sides share and supplement each others' capabilities. In the economic sphere cooperation was sought in the area of Information technology which led to the holding of an I.T. summit in Japan in September 2001. Indeed I.T is an area where India has rapidly established its presence in Japan. Between 1995-96 and 2001-2002, India's software exports to Japan have increased more than 14 times from \$16 million to \$236 million. There are more than forty Indian software companies in Tokyo and surrounding areas. About eight hundred software engineers are working in Indian and Japanese concerns as well as many multinationals. (MEA).

The visit of the Indian Prime Minister Mr Atal Behari Vajpayee to

Japan in December 2001 came amidst the emerging global concern on international terrorism in the aftermath of World Trade Centre bombings. It was natural that global security situation would dominate the bilateral deliberations as the two countries apart from discussing institutionalization of defence exchanges, agreed to have a dialogue on counter terrorism in the framework of the India -Japan Comprehensive Security Dialogue. It therefore became apparent, that a discussion of economic as well as political issues would henceforth be the key to strengthening of the future relationship between the two countries.

What are the points of convergence that may emerge out of this partnership if it has to have a sustaining basis and not remain a mere slogan? The first and the foremost thing that is needed, and which the Eminent Person's Group Report very aptly summarises, both the countries have to identify and communicate their respective strengths rather than lament the weaknesses that exist in their respective economies. One such area of strength could be the fusion of Indian I.T. industry and Japan's conventional manufacturing industry, which could boost economic growth in both countries. (EPG, MOFA). Another significant plea that has been made is the need for greater exchange among the scientific communities of the two countries which are advanced in scientific research yet have minimal scientific interaction.

The real challenge for finding convergence would however come from the areas relating to political and strategic environment. While both India and Japan find themselves on the same side on issues relating

to international terrorism and nuclear non proliferation, it would be pragmatic for both the countries to support the creation of a global order which fosters multilateralism in international relations and reinforces the principal of parity among nations. The post cold war world appears to be dismantling the very edifice on which the notions of an International order based on peace and equality among nations were based. The emergence of a single superpower has neither made world a peaceful place to live nor has it led to lessening of conflicts among nations. Despite its past limitations, a reformed and strengthened United Nations is much better suited to respond to global challenges. It is in this context, India and Japan should provide a leading voice for strengthening the multilateral voice in international relations. Given the current proximity of both the countries to the United States, the task of mobilizing support for multilateralism while remaining strategically allied with the only superpower appears to be an onerous task.. But that is where the ultimate test of a revitalized strength of an 'India-Japan Partnership for the 21st Century' would lie.

Conclusion

An overview of the background and prospects of India-Japan relations shows that the two countries are yet to realize the potential of 'beneficial bilateralism' to the best possible extent. Although the two had built up a close relationship in the formative period of their respective national consolidation, yet their was never a motivating push that could raise the level of interaction to new heights. This could possibly be explained by the respective foreign policy orientations of both countries. Differing ideological perceptions on

the shape of global order prevented the two from deepening the bilateral context of the relationship.

The gradual transformation of global economic and political order in the recent times however has altered the context in which relations between India and Japan are to be seen. At a time when traditional alliances are giving way to pragmatic partnerships, both the countries find themselves at critical stages of their bilateral interaction. Both have a stake in a global order that is based on plurality and interdependence in both economic and strategic spheres. A renewed Indo-Japanese relationship based on economic complementarity and strategic convergence therefore appears to be uniquely placed in raising bilateral interactions to a new high. There are indications already that a more mature appreciation of each other's position has been emerging given the fact that both the countries were able to tide over the circumstances succeeding India's nuclear tests of 1998. A further consolidation of this interaction through regular intervals at governmental and non-governmental levels would therefore set the pace for further deepening the relations between two countries.

References

- Embassy of Japan in India, *Japan Calling* January-March 2003, p.3
Embassy of Japan in India, *Visits by Prominent Persons, VIPs*,
[http://www.japan-emb.org.in/Japan-India Relations/Japan-India Relations11.htm](http://www.japan-emb.org.in/Japan-India%20Relations/Japan-India%20Relations11.htm)
Erich Altbach, *Indian Nuclear Tests Provoke Sanctions from Tokyo*,
Washington, Japan Economic Institute Report, No. 20-May 22,

1998. www.jei.org/Archive/JEIR98/9820W2.html

James L. Hoffman ed. *Modern Japan: An Encyclopedia of History, Culture and Nationalism*, Garland Publishing, New York, 1998

Ministry of External Affairs, India, *India Japan Bilateral Relations*,
<http://www.meadev.nic.in/foreign/indo-japan.htm>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, MOFA <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/epg/report0111.html>

P A N Murthy, 'India and Japan – New Stage in Bilateral Relations',
in Virendra Grover ed. *International Relations and Foreign Policy of India: China, Japan and India's Foreign Policy*, Deep and Deep,
New Delhi 1992.

S. Jaishankar, *India Japan relations after Pokhran II*, Seminar, No.487,
2000. <http://www.india-seminar.com/2000/487/487/20jaishankar.htm>

Takashi Inoguchi, *Japan's International Relations*, Westview, Boulder.
1991

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, MOFA, *Japan and India Relations*, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region.asia-paci/India/relation.relation.html>