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The Summit Meets during this week in Tokyo between the Japanese and Indian Prime Ministers going by the strategic assertions made by them perceptively reflect the intentions of both Japan and India to emerge as anchors of Asian security.

At a time when the Asian security environment stands troubled by Chinese expansionism on its land and maritime peripheries, and which was indirectly referred to by the Indian Prime Minister, Japan and India declaring their intentions for a more enhanced Strategic and Global Partnership makes eminent sense in Asian capitals.

Japan and India as the 'Twin Pillars of Asian Security' was repetitively referred to in the past in all my writings on the subject of Asian security. The two dynamic Prime Ministers of Japan and India courageously involved in transforming the so far timid security postures of their nations have signalled by their elevating the Japan-India Strategic and Global Partnership to that of "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" that they would now henceforth be engaged in emerging as 'Anchors of Asian Security'.

Japan and India's initiatives so taken stand widely welcomed with the exception of China which has accused Japan of driving a wedge between China and India developing a strong relationship. China needs to be wary of what it asserts on this score as what China can now proceed to undertake, China itself could be accused of driving a wedge between India and Japan, China cannot be oblivious to the strategic reality that it would take generations and strategic humility for China to wipe clean the intense "Strategic Distrust" it has embedded in the Indian psyche.

Significantly, India did not concede the appellation of "Special" to its various Strategic Partnerships with many nations, not even the United

States. Only the Former Soviet Union was so described. That speaks volumes of the significance that India attaches to elevating its Strategic Partnership with Japan.

The Tokyo Declaration between Japan and India and the entire reportage on the historic meetings in Tokyo between their two Prime Ministers stand amply covered in the media. It is not the intention here to go into a repetition of these. In this Paper, I would like to dwell more on the strategic significance of the declarations/assertions made in this elevated 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership'.

Needless to state that such proximate strategic partnerships are under-pinned by a strong dosage of substantial economic engagement and cooperation as the \$ 35 billion infrastructure aid for India by Japan would indicate, besides increased FDI and increased Japanese industrial investments in India

The most significant strategic observation that needs to be made is that what has emerged in the Tokyo Summit is the indisputable reality of the strong "Strategic Trust" that has evolved between India and Japan and that augurs well not only for these two emerging Asian Powers but also for Indo Pacific Asia as a whole.

"Strategic Distrust" of China in the Asian power play and in Asian capitals bedevils the Asian security environment. This not only applies to Japan and India but also to the Indo Pacific region as a whole. It would be reassuring for the region that 'Strategic Trust' has matured at least in the other two Asian powers who can now expect for a magnetic draw-in of lesser powers as the nucleus of an "Indigenous Asian Coalition" of security arrangement. This point stood made by me in different International Seminars in the last one year or more.

Future Asian military flash-points are not likely to occur on land borders. Going by current indicators Asian flash-points will be endemic to the vast maritime expanses of the Indo Pacific from the East China Sea, through the vast South China Sea and further to the Indian Ocean. Both Japan and India have high stakes in the 'freedom of the global commons'. Combining the maritime strengths and potential of the Japanese and Indian Navies would enable them to offset any dilution of the US Navy predominance in Indo Pacific region which so far ensured maritime security in the region.

The maritime coalition of Japan and India would find favour with and strongly supported not only in Indo Pacific but also by the United States, Australia, South East Asian countries and Europe, all of whom have sizeable economic stakes in the free flow of commerce spanning these maritime expanses.

Enhancement of strategic profiles by Japan and India, a process that is underway, would provide balance to the Asian balance-of-power' equilibrium which stood tilted in China's favour by United States hedging strategies towards China ignoring Japan's and Indian strategic sensitivities.

United States henceforth in its Asian security formulations may start taking appropriate notice and apply course corrections and accord strategic respect to Japan and India emerging as anchors of Asian security.

Japan and India after the discussions in Tokyo are set on significantly increasing their military cooperation, right across the entire spectrum of defence cooperation including defence production and technology transfers.

Civilian nuclear cooperation agreement that India had hoped for did not materialise at Tokyo. Going by the understandable Japanese public opposition to matters nuclear, the delay in agreement can be understood. The important point is that Japan has not rejected the agreement and discussions are on. Both the Prime Ministers have directed their respective negotiating teams on this subject to speed up the process of finalisation.

Concluding, one would like to observe that elevating the Japan-India Strategic Partnership to “Special Strategic and Global Partnership” by Japan’s Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is an epochal milestone in Japan-India relations never attempted before. Strategic ambiguities on Asian security stand shedded by India and Japan correspondingly has broken out of its self-imposed pacifism, enabling both nations to give shape to their joint intentions of emerging as anchors of Asian security.

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