

Japan December 03

## **Statement by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi (The Basic Plan regarding the measures based on the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq)**

December 9, 2003

The Cabinet today decided on the Basic Plan regarding the measures based on the Law Concerning the Special Measures on Humanitarian and Reconstruction Assistance in Iraq. This Basic Plan provides the implementation of the activities for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance, including medical services, water supply, rehabilitation and maintenance of utilities and transportation of materials to be carried out by the Units of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the Support Personnel for the Reconstruction of Iraq. The support activities for ensuring security can also be implemented according to this Basic Plan.

The urgent issue in Iraq, whose land and lives had been ruined during the quarter-century of oppression, is to swiftly establish a free and democratic government by the Iraqi people; nearly 40 countries have already sent their troops to provide a variety of assistance. On October 16th, the United Nations Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1511 to confirm that the international community is united in its efforts to achieve the reconstruction and stability of Iraq. The period until transfer of authority, planned in June next year, will be critically important in paving the way for the reconstruction and stability. Japan is of the view that the United Nations and the international community should play a more active role and wishes to be actively engaged in discussion to that end, arguing for what we should do so.

After the end of the Second World War, our predecessors, maintaining the alliance with the United States and international cooperation, overcame severe misery and hardship to build the present prosperity of Japan. The peace and stability of the whole international community is indispensable for Japan's security and prosperity, as we depend so much on other countries; we thus have to actively contribute to that end.

Reconstructing Iraq is extremely significant for the stability of the entire Middle East and ultimately the international community, and serves the interests of Japan. In addition to financial contribution, we believe it is important to demonstrate to the Iraqi people Japanese assistance provided by the Japanese people. From this viewpoint, we have conducted studies, including a series of fact-finding missions in the fields, on the needs of the people of Iraq and the security situations in Iraq amongst others, and have decided on the Basic Plan. The personnel dispatched under this Basic Plan will mainly be engaged in helping the people of Iraq reconstruct and rebuild their own country.

There are some who do not wish for the reconstruction of Iraq or for the establishment of a free and democratic Iraq by the men and women of Iraq. It is extremely important that the international community resolutely counter such attempts to throw Iraq into disarray on the one hand, and implement necessary reconstruction assistance, improving the present circumstances of communities and livings in Iraq which would otherwise generate terrorism on the other hand.

[http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle\\_e/iraq/issue2003/pmstate0312.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/iraq/issue2003/pmstate0312.html)

3/8/2004

9 DEC 2003

0 T O

The Self-Defense Forces that work for the reconstruction assistance will not use force. There is no organization other than the self-sustained Self-Defense Forces that can make use of its organization to continue effective humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. We will dispatch the first-class personnel who follow the orders with strong sense of mission and is voluntarily resolved to be there. I am convinced that they will successfully accomplish their missions, showing what they have achieved in their days of training. We are also planning to send the civilians with knowledge and experience as experts, high ability and strong will as the Support Personnel for the Reconstruction of Iraq.

When dispatching these personnel on mission, the Government will make utmost efforts, such as analyzing the relevant information of local security situations as well as sufficiently preparing for and carefully paying attention to the implementation of each and every activities.

The Government will also further strive for thorough counter-terrorism measures, and leave no stone unturned to ensure the safety of the people of Japan.

We must not forget the regrettable loss of Ambassador Oku and First Secretary Inoue, who fell victim to villainy, leaving their families bereaved in their prime. Let us advance together with the international community in our assistance to the reconstruction of Iraq and the people of Iraq. Such efforts will indeed lead the world to peace and stability.

I sincerely ask for your understanding of and support to this decision of the Government.

9 DEC 2003

# Japan stands firm on Iraq, says Koizumi

Ravindra Kumar in Tokyo

Dec. 2. — Three days after the slaying of his country's diplomats in Iraq, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi iterated that Japan would "fulfil its responsibility as a member of the international community" by continuing to send "self-defence forces, government officials and civilians" to Baghdad.

Immediately after the slayings, and reacting to criticism from Opposition groups, Mr Koizumi had expressed his willingness to discuss the matter with a committee of the Japanese parliament. Today, in an exclusive hour-long interaction with editors of Asia News Network — a grouping of 14 Asian newspapers including *The Statesman* — Mr Koizumi said parliament had approved legislation to assist in the reconstruction of Iraq before self-defence forces were sent. "There is no change whatsoever in Japan's position," he added.

Japan, Mr Koizumi said, attaches importance to its alliance with the United States of America, just as it does to international cooperation, and sees



Mr Koizumi sees Japan's foreign and trade policy as having three focal points — the USA, China and Asean

## 'China no threat'

TOKYO, Dec. 2. — Japan, the Prime Minister said, does not see China as a threat. Indeed, China's remarkable growth was good for Japan. "I have been stressing that this should be taken as a great opportunity and not as a threat," Mr Koizumi said. People, he said, were once worried that Chinese products would flood the markets, that Japanese manufacturers would be hit and that the deflation in Japan would worsen. "But if you see recent trade statistics, Japanese exports to China have been going up as well." There is thus a growing awareness that China is a large market, next only to the US, for the Japanese. Mr Koizumi also saw China overtaking South Korea as the country that sends the most tourists to Japan. "When others thrive, you thrive," he said. — SNS

these as the active ingredients of its foreign policy.

But while his buzzword was international cooperation, it seemed clear that Mr Koizumi sees Japan's foreign and trade policy as having three focal points — the USA, China and the Asean.

In the build-up to the Japan-Asean commemorative summit in Tokyo

later this month, Mr Koizumi said his country attached great significance to its relations with Asean. This is the first time Asean leaders are holding a summit outside the member countries with a dialogue partner, and the Prime Minister saw this as underlining the special relationship between the regional

grouping and Japan.

Asked about the role of terrorism in South Asia, especially in Afghanistan and Pakistan, and the need for stability in the region, Mr Koizumi said the fight against terror was one with a "new dimension". He was careful though to sidestep references to Pakistan, and went only so far as to say that in both Afghanistan and Iraq, the fight against terrorism has become very serious.

"Whether they call them terrorist organisations or radicals", there are very difficult confrontations between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, and in Sri Lanka with the Tamil Tigers, Mr Koizumi said. It is only through dialogue that relations between the two South Asian neighbours could proceed positively.

Earlier, explaining ANN to the Prime Minister, Dato' Ng Poh Tip, Group Chief Editor of *The Star*, said the network comprised 14 newspapers having a combined readership of over 50 million in 12 countries. ANN, an initiative supported by the Konrad-Adenauer Foundation, was formed in 1998.

## Ten terror suspects arrested in Britain

LONDON, Dec. 2. — British police arrested 10 people, including two women, on suspicion of terrorism offences in raids in two cities today.

Four men were arrested in London this morning, and four men and two women were arrested in the university city of Cambridge, the Metropolitan Police said.

Police said they executed a search

warrant at an address in Cambridge, and arrested three men and the two women there. They later arrested another man at a different address, and all were being held in Cambridge. Both premises were being searched.

Those arrested in Cambridge and the four in London were all detained under section 41 of the Terrorism Act

"on suspicion of involvement in the commission, preparation or instigation of acts of terrorism", police said.

In London, four men were detained by anti-terrorist officers who raided six homes and three business addresses in southwest London shortly after 5 a.m. (GMT). The four men were being questioned at a central London police station. — AP

# 'Japan won't give in to terrorists'

## Two Japanese diplomats, seven Spaniards killed in Iraq

**Baghdad:** A group of gunmen ambushed and killed two Japanese diplomats in Iraq in an apparent terrorist attack, officials said on Sunday. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi vowed he would continue fighting terrorism. The deaths are the first of Japanese in Iraq since the US-led invasion and came as Tokyo prepares to send non-combat troops to help the reconstruction.

Officials in Tokyo said on Sunday the incident would not influence their preliminary plans to dispatch the soldiers. "Japan has a responsibility to provide humanitarian and reconstruction aid in Iraq," Mr Koizumi said. "There is no change to our policy of not giving in to terrorism."

Details of the attack were still sketchy, but Japanese foreign minister Yoriko Kawaguchi said in Tokyo the diplomats' vehicle was ambushed near the city of Tikrit, where the envoys were to attend an aid conference. US military spokesman Lt. Col. William MacDonald said unidentified gunmen fired small-calibre weapons at the men when they stopped to buy food and drinks at a stand outside the village of Mukayshifa on the road between Baghdad and Tikrit. They had been travelling without a military escort, he said. Their Iraqi driver was also killed in the incident.

Guerrillas killed two US soldiers and wounded a third in an ambush in western Iraq, a military statement said on Sunday. A day earlier, seven Spanish intelligence agents in an attack near Baghdad.

With the latest deaths, guerrillas have killed 106 coalition troops in Iraq in November, with 79 American soldiers slain along with 25 other allied soldiers. In terms of coalition losses, it has been the bloodiest month of the war that began on March 20. A military statement said the US troops were killed when a task force from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment was hit Saturday by rocket-propelled grenades and automatic fire east of the border town of Husaybah, 300 km north-west of Baghdad.

In Mahmudiyah, 29 km south of Baghdad, assailants ambushed a team of Spanish military intelligence officers on Saturday, killing seven agents. One Spaniard escaped the assault. Television footage of the aftermath of the ambush showed several bodies along a highway as cars, their headlights on, drove by at dusk. People milled around, and a young man— apparently aware he was being



An Iraqi youth stands near a burnt-out car south of Baghdad on Sunday, a day after a deadly attack on Spanish troops.

filmed— kicked his foot in the air over a body. Another rested his foot on a corpse, an arm raised in triumph. "We sacrifice our souls and blood for you, oh Saddam," some in the group chanted in Arabic, witnesses said.

On Sunday, witnesses at the scene, about 50 km south of Baghdad, said the Spaniards had been travelling in a pair of sport utility vehicles when men in

a car behind them opened fire. One of the SUVs careened off the road into a ditch.

The occupants fled the car and were shot at the roadside, perhaps by a second group of attackers involved in the ambush. On Sunday, the charred remains of the car could be seen in a watery ditch at the side of the road, with a group of villagers scavenging its parts. AP

# Mixed verdict

## Koizumi has his task cut out

Something is stirring in the Land of the Rising Sun, where the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) has ruled almost uninterrupted for the last 55 years. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi has once again led the LDP-led coalition to victory, but only just, while the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) has surged to 177 seats in the 480-seat lower house. This gives Japan a real opposition for the first time in a very long time. That the LDP lost its absolute majority is also significant, although it has since made up its numbers by merging with one of its alliance partners. Smaller parties have also lost heavily. All of which can be summarised by saying that Japan has moved (at last!) from a single-party state to a two-party system. And that could set its economy, becalmed since the 1990s, moving once again.

When Prime Minister Koizumi was elected for the first time, two and a half years ago, it was on the promise of reform that would break the economic logjam. But he has delivered only very slowly, mostly due to entrenched resistance from within the ranks of the LDP which has, over its very long reign, forged connections with lucrative vested interests. Under the LDP's sponsorship Japan became, for instance, a construction state, where billions of dollars were spent on unnecessary construction projects on the theory, mistaken as it turned out, that they would pump prime the economy and get it back on its legs. The DPJ, whose support bases are among youth and in the urban sector, is strongly pro-reform. Now that voters see it as a real alternative for forming a government, that should step up pressure on the government to perform. Koizumi ought to be able to tell conservatives in his party that failure to change would result in a DPJ victory next time, making it imperative for the party to respond better to public aspirations. But he may face an uphill struggle, as some LDP conservatives too have done well in the elections, and they could use that to question his assumptions about public aspirations.

Japan has been called the world's first functioning socialist society, but Koizumi is aware that it is not functioning as it once did, and has identified some of the solutions, such as turning over government services like road construction and maintenance to private enterprise, and reforming the banking sector that is sinking under the burden of non-performing loans. Now is the time to act on them. Japan has been in similar ruts before, and in each case managed to regenerate itself. It responded to Western incursions with the remarkable Meiji restoration (1868-1912) which modernized and industrialized the country. And its second birth took place after the Second World War. It may now be time for a third birth, to break out of its decade-long stagnation and reap advantages from the post-industrial global economic scene. Japan moving once again would be good news for the world, and reason to celebrate in Asia.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2003

Japan 119.10 THE JAPANESE VERDICT 13/11

FOR A COUNTRY where the two-party system was not even a dream for half a century, Sunday's parliamentary election result in Japan had one clear message. It announced the arrival of an opposition party that can offer an alternative to the Liberal Democratic Party. The LDP-led coalition, which has been ruling the country almost uninterrupted for five decades, secured a fresh mandate but saw its majority reduced. Gaining at the ruling combine's expense was the Democratic Party of Japan, a five-year-old alliance of splinter groups of the LDP and socialists of the Liberal Party that has been taking a centrist line on key policy issues. The LDP, headed by the mercurial Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, lost its independent majority in the lower house, securing 237 of the 480 seats, though the coalition led by it managed to retain power with an overall majority of 275 seats. The Democratic Party won 177 seats, a substantial increase of 40. It is unlikely that the election verdict will cast a shadow on Mr. Koizumi's administration in the immediate term. However, the country's political life can be expected to turn livelier, particularly in the context of the key political and economic decisions that will need to be taken in the next few months.

It was for the first time in post-war Japan that the ruling Liberal Democratic Party faced a robust challenge from the opposition on a range of issues — from the economy to Tokyo's announced support for the U.S.-led occupation of Iraq. As the first real opposition, the Democratic Party raised expectations among voters dissatisfied with the virtual one-party system. It was also the first time that the electorate was passing judgment on Mr. Koizumi's economic and political reforms. He had overwhelmed anti-reformist, conservative elements within his own party two months ago, describing his vic-

tory at that time as a "major turning point" and vowing to put an end to the politics of "shadow shoguns". A big enough margin would have helped him pursue his agenda with renewed vigour. The reduced strength of his party and of the ruling alliance and the emergence of the opposition Democratic Party as a dynamic force must be seen as a setback for him. The powerful faction leaders he took on and ousted in the party election can be expected to try and make a comeback.

As the post-election domestic battles begin, Mr. Koizumi will face a stronger opposition to his decision to send non-combat soldiers to occupied Iraq. His support for the U.S. 'war on terror' and Japan's pledge of cash and troops to help rebuild Iraq did not become a major issue during the election campaign despite the Democratic Party's portrayal of the Prime Minister as Washington's lackey. But popular opposition to the decision will gain strength in the wake of the Democratic Party's showing, reviving now dormant but once violently active anti-Americanism. Under the 61-year-old Prime Minister, there has been a distinct rise in the profile of Japan on the international scene. This will get a boost if the LDP presses ahead with its plan to amend Japan's pacifist constitution to acknowledge the existence of its powerful military, a move until recently regarded as taboo. As Tokyo prepares to shoulder greater global responsibilities, with a prospective seat as a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, there are nagging worries for the country from the regional situation. Much depends on how maturely and soberly the Koizumi Government handles relations with North Korea against the backdrop of the latter's turbulent relations with the United States on its nuclear programme.

# Koizumi party gets lifeline

Tokyo, Nov. 10 (Reuters): The smallest party in Japan's ruling coalition said today it would merge with the dominant ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), allowing the LDP to regain the majority it lost in a general election.

Toshihiro Nikai, secretary-general of the New Conservative Party, said his party had accepted a proposal from Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, who heads the LDP, that the two parties join.

"The Prime Minister said it might be a more effective way to fulfill our promises to the people if our parties merged and worked together," Nikai said. "We will accept."

The move will push the total number of LDP seats in the lower chamber to 244 out of 480, down from the 247 held before yesterday's election but more than the 241 needed for a majority, giving Koizumi more strength as he tries to pursue his reform agenda. But strong gains made by the Opposition could make progress in reforms difficult. Koizumi's three-way camp saw its strength in parliament's 480-seat Lower House shrink to 275 seats from 287 in yesterday's general election, while the opposition Democrats took 177, up from 137, the unofficial count showed. In a sign that the popular Koizumi's personal magic had faded, the LDP took only 137 seats in the election. Today, though, three independents said they would join, bringing the total to 240, and another six said they might follow suit.

The New Conservative Party fared badly in the election, keeping only four of the nine seats it had held. Among the losers was party head Hiroshi Kumagai. Some analysts, however, said the poor performance by the LDP and big gains by the main opposition Democratic Party could be a blessing in disguise for proponents of change.

That is because Koizumi's divided LDP must either embrace reform more fully now, or give way later to the pro-change opposition Democrats, they said. "We were able to build a foundation to continue reforms under the current structure (coalition), having won a stable majority," Koizumi said. He seems certain to remain premier when the Lower House convenes, probably next week. He also said the present cabinet line-up would stay. But several analysts were quick to predict that his reform agenda of reduced public spending, privatisation and cures for the nation's ailing banks faced rough going.

# Victory leaves Koizumi upbeat

Yomiuri Shimbun/ANN

TOKYO, Nov. 10. — The results of the House of Representatives election showed that the Liberal Democratic Party-led coalition “has won the public’s confidence”, Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi said at a press conference held at LDP headquarters today.

“The LDP reached its initial target of 240 seats, and the LDP, New Komeito and Hoshushinto (New Conservative Party) were able to secure a stable majority,” Mr Koizumi said. “The election result has built a foundation for the coalition to keep working on (structural) reforms.”

He said the LDP had succeeded in winning the support of floating voters, who in the past have tended not to cast ballots for the party.

Mr Koizumi reiterated that he did not plan to change senior LDP officials or reshuffle his Cabinet after the election.

He said he intended to do his utmost to:

- Reform the nation’s pension system.
- Realise the so-called triple reform of local governments’ fiscal conditions.
- Reform the four road-related public corporations.
- Privatise the three postal services.

“The debate on whether to privatise (the postal ser-

vices) has already been concluded,” he said. “Now we must discuss how to privatise them.”

The Prime Minister also said he would decide whether to dispatch Self-Defence Forces personnel to Iraq to help reconstruct the war-torn country after carefully studying local situations. “In dispatching SDF troops, we must pay special consideration to their safety.”

He added that he believed the dispatch plan has received public support since the ruling coalition, which maintained that the dispatch was necessary before and during the election, have won a stable majority in the lower House.



# Koizumi claims mandate for reform agenda

Japan  
11/11

11/11

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, NOV. 10.** The Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, today led the ruling coalition to a definitive victory, even if only by a slender margin, in the country's latest general election that was held on Sunday.

He interpreted the narrow victory as a mandate for his reform agenda, in spite of a dramatic upturn in the political fortunes of the main Opposition outfit, the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ).

While the DPJ's performance signalled the possibility of the eventual emergence of a two-party system in Japan, Mr. Koizumi's own Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) stayed ahead of all the others in the fray.

While the LDP failed to secure an absolute majority on its own strength in the 480-member House of Representatives, the post-poll decision of three Independent winners to throw their lot with Mr. Koizumi raised the party's tally to exactly the 50 per cent mark — 240.

The New Conservative Party, which contested Sunday's general election as a constituent of the governing coalition, decided to merge with LDP tonight.

With this, the total strength of Mr. Koizumi's party in the new House of Representatives rose



**The Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, at a press conference in Tokyo on Monday after leading his ruling bloc to a narrow victory. — AP**

to 244. His coalition's overall tally was now placed at 278 seats, inclusive of the 34 that the New Komeito party won as an LDP ally.

This signified a fall in the coalition's profile, which stood at 287 before the latest poll. For the DPJ and its leader, Naoto Kan, the party's new score line of 177 seats represented not only a numerical leap from 137 in the previous House but also a qualitative upswing, according to regional political observers.

Basking in this new glow of

success, Mr. Kan noted that the parameters of Japanese politics, dominated by a single party in the company of its satellites for long, were now changing. Mr. Koizumi, who had promised to tame the "shadow shoguns" of the Japanese political culture, did not see the new poll verdict as a vote for ending the LDP 'hegemony', a phenomenon that the Opposition perceived as the bane of the country's public life.

Instead of seeing the new reality as a setback to either the LDP or his own politics, Mr. Koizumi reaffirmed his pledge to carry forward structural economic reforms and indicated that he would not resile from his position that Japan should send its troops on "non-combat duties" in aid of the U.S. military forces in Iraq. Nonetheless, he underlined that the evolving security situation in Iraq would determine the timing of an actual deployment there.

# Koizumi's coalition scrapes past majority mark

Yomiuri Shimbun/ANN

TOKYO, Nov. 9. — Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party-led coalition suffered a major setback but secured a stable majority in the House of Representatives, according to unofficial late election results today, while the largest Opposition party, Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), made impressive gains.

The LDP was unlikely to achieve its goal of gaining a majority of 241 seats in the 480-member lower House. Before the House was dissolved, the LDP

held 247 seats. The LDP and its two coalition parties had a combined total of 287 seats prior to the dissolution.

As of 1:15 a.m. (Tokyo time), 269 candidates from the three ruling parties had been unofficially declared winners in the lower House election, with 232 for the LDP, 33 for New Komeito and four for Hoshushinto (New Conservative Party), according to post-election predictions by Yomiuri Shimbun and NTV.

Meanwhile, 171 Minshuto candidates were unofficially declared winners, a significant increase from its pre-election



strength from 137. The focus last night was on whether the three-party coalition would be able to

## Promises to keep

- Slash public spending, which has ballooned the country's enormous debt
- Privatise many of the nation's public administrations
- Try and stem the country's rising crime rate — some of which has been blamed on foreigners. A substantial increase in police controls on immigration in the next three years, and to tighten controls on immigration
- Draft a revision for the Constitution, which renounces war and precludes combat troops for Japan

eventually gain a stable majority in the lower house) means that the public has given the three ruling parties a new mandate,"

LDP president Mr Junichiro Koizumi said in a TV interview late last night. "This will enable the ruling parties to carry on its structural reform drive."

Minshuto leader Mr Naoto Kan expressed pleasure at the favourable predictions about his party's gains in the general election, insisting that Mr Koizumi should step down if the LDP's eventual strength fell short of 233 seats, equivalent to the number of seats the party gained in the 2000 general election under the former administration of unpopular Prime Minister Mr Yoshiro Mori.

"Such an election result should be seen as a loss of public trust in the Prime Minister," he said. "If the LDP's eventual gain does not reach 233 and my party's gain exceeds 200, I'll strive to form a government led by Minshuto, opening the door to everyone and anyone."

The election result means that the nation's politics will probably revolve around two major parties — the LDP and Minshuto.

The LDP, New Komeito and Hoshushinto are expected to keep their coalition intact, with Mr Koizumi remaining Prime

Minister, according to analysts. Voter turnout stood at about 60 percent down from 62.49 per cent in the 2000 general election, according to Yomiuri Shimbun estimate.

Mr Koizumi is expected to be named Prime Minister at a special Diet (lower House) session, likely to be convened on 18 or 19 November. The current Cabinet members will likely be retained in a new administration to be launched shortly afterwards.

This general election was the first to be held under the administration of Mr Koizumi, who took the government reins in 2001.

20/12/03 ✓  
**Koizumi's reform agenda on test** NO. 12  
9/11 ✓

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, NOV. 8.** The Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, and the leader of the main Opposition Democratic Party of Japan, Naoto Kan, raised competitive politics to a new pitch in Tokyo on the eve of Sunday's national election.

In a sense, the election to the 480-seat House of Representatives has turned into a political referendum on Mr. Koizumi's reform agenda that consists of plans to restructure the ailing economy and cleanse the party systems.

Domestic issues, such as the availability of jobs and public spending as also private sector initiative, dominated the campaign themes. Attention was also turned on the postal services, highways and pensions. While some of these issues impinge on Mr. Koizumi's reform agenda, a counter-point made during the quest for votes was that an economic revival, and not a re-invention of the economy would be the "people's priority".

External issues were less in evidence as campaign themes, despite a high-profile visit to Tokyo by the U.S. President, George W. Bush, after the poll was notified. Mr. Koizumi did not stake his political prestige on his move to send Japanese troops to Iraq on "non-combat



**The Democratic Party leader, Naoto Kan (right), shakes hands with a supporter in Tokyo on Saturday. — AP**

duties" in aid of the U.S. forces there. Although he had played the prime mover in piloting a legislation in support of his Iraq initiative, Mr. Koizumi did not project it as a campaign theme, if only because he did not want to appear to be placing Japanese soldiers in harm's way, ac-

ording to regional diplomats and analysts.

However, Mr. Kan reminded the voters on Saturday that the Japanese troops, who could only be armed within the re-interpreted limits of the country's pro-peace Constitution, should be sent to Iraq only on the basis

of definitive U.N. norms.

As for the numbers game of this parliamentary poll, Mr. Koizumi campaigned hard to secure an absolute majority for his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which currently shares power with two other outfits in a coalition. He had led the LDP to a clear victory in the upper House elections two years ago, and the party has not so far won an absolute majority in the lower House of Representatives since the introduction of the present electoral system about a decade ago.

Opinion polls have indicated the possibility of an LDP victory on the strength of Mr. Koizumi's rating of 53 per cent as the preferred candidate for prime ministership.

However, the "resistance group" within his party may get emboldened even if he were to carry the ruling coalition to power but without the LDP itself securing the 233 seats that it got in the 2000 general election under Yoshiro Mori, who was considered quite 'unpopular' in the electoral arena.

Mr. Koizumi is leading his party for the first time in an election for the House of Representatives.

# Japanese troops on humanitarian mission

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, JULY 26.** Japan today enacted a legislation that would authorise the deployment of the 'Self-Defence Forces' (SDF) in Iraq on a humanitarian mission, even in the absence of an explicit United Nations mandate for the presence of international military personnel. The law would also catapult Tokyo onto the global stage as a new proactive player with a stake in the big game of peace.

The special measures bill, endorsing the move send troops on a "non-combat mission" for reconstruction efforts, was passed by the House of Councilors in Tokyo, but only after scuffles had broken out in the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of that upper chamber of Diet. The bill was approved by the lower chamber, the House of Representatives, on July 4.

The final voting took place after the Committee had cleared the bill following the closure of the debate that was hastened by the passage of a government-sponsored motion. This sparked anger among the Opposition members, some of whom rushed to the Chairman's seat, complaining against the governing coalition's tactics of "railroading" the bill's passage.

It was at that stage that some scuffles occurred. In the event,

110-12 2777  
the final vote in the plenary session of the upper chamber, as distinct from the committee, was 136 in favour and 102 against. This did not, of course, reflect the trend in the latest sample survey of public opinion, in which about 55 per cent of the respondents were reported to have opposed the passage of the bill even if they were to perform only the duties of what a critic described as "the water supply troops".

The path to the final passage of the bill was very arduous, as seen from the Government's perspective. The Opposition parties mounted a concerted effort to block or delay its passage through unsuccessful censure motions against one Minister after another and also through a failed no-confidence bid in the lower chamber itself. It was after the failure of the no-trust move that the committee of the upper chamber endorsed the bill. Aware that the substantive arguments against the bill centred on its tenability under Japan's anti-war constitution and also the safety of the SDF's non-combat personnel in Iraq, the Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, said in Tokyo today that the people would support his measure, later even if not at this stage, just as they had done in the case of his earlier legislative efforts to send out SDF personnel on anti-terror 'logistic' duties.

## Do or Diet—War in Iraq, ambush in Tokyo



AP  
Opposition members swarm to the chairman to stop passage of the Iraq Bill forced by ruling party lawmakers in the upper house of the Diet, the Japanese parliament, in Tokyo on Friday. The ruling party plans to approve the bill which will enable the Japanese government to despatch its forces to Iraq to help reconstruct the war-torn country.

26 JUL 2003

# Japan stops aid to Myanmar

AP  
Associated Press

YANGON, June 25. — Japan today froze all financial aid to Myanmar to punish its military regime for detaining Ms Aung San Suu Kyi, as the junta denied the pro-democracy leader was being held at the infamous Insein prison.

Japan is one of the few developed countries in direct talks with Myanmar's junta and is the country's largest aid donor. Tokyo gave Yangon 9.2 billion yen (\$77.96 million) in fiscal 2001, the latest year for which figures are available.

In a meeting today, Myanmar home minister Col Tin Hlaing told British ambassador Ms Vicky Bowman that Ms Suu Kyi was not detained in Insein, Mr Martin Garret, a British diplomat said. He said the minister "did not say where she was kept but denied that she was in Insein".

Japan's decision to freeze the aid comes two days after its senior vice-foreign minister Mr Tetsuro Yano returned empty handed from a mission to Myanmar to secure the the Opposition leader's release.

Japan has generally tried to engage Myanmar's military government in a dialogue



The Japanese foreign minister, Ms Yoriko Kawaguchi

with promises of aid. Its new stance puts it closer to the positions of the USA, EU and Britain, which have already imposed sanctions to press for Suu Kyi's freedom. "If Ms Suu Kyi was released, Japan would reconsider resuming aid," a Japanese foreign ministry official in Tokyo said.

Also today, UN special envoy Mr Razali Ismail, the only outsider to see Ms Suu Kyi since her 30 May arrest, met with Japanese foreign minister Yoriko Kawaguchi to inform her about his visit to Myanmar. Mr Razali later said UN officials were "increasingly alarmed" about how long it's taking to release the pro-democracy leader. "They (the junta) told me they would release her as soon as things were normalised. This does not assure me at all."

# Japan sends out a political message

By P. S. Suryanarayana

SINGAPORE, MARCH 28. For the first time, Japan today asserted a measure of strategic autonomy in relation to the United States over a matter of vital security concern to the authorities in Tokyo. Japan successfully launched two spy satellites from the Tanegashima Space Centre in accordance with Tokyo's updated security concerns.

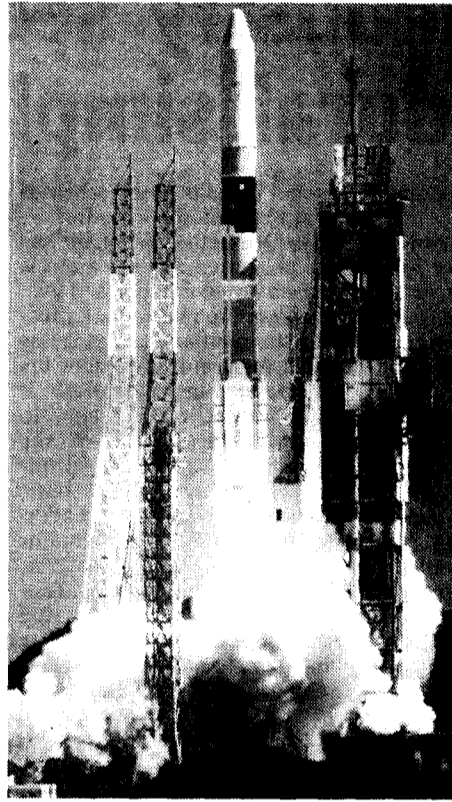
This was seen by neighbouring North Korea as a hostile and provocative action, though. By successfully placing the spy satellites into orbit around the Earth at the pre-determined time, Junichiro Koizumi's administration in Tokyo sent out a political message that it would try to do what it might take to safeguard Japan's national security without, in the process, making light of the sustainable U.S. agenda of protecting Japan as a very close ally.

Announcing the major event on Japan's strategic calendar, the country's Chief Cabinet Secretary, Yasuo Fukuda, said he was 'delighted' that "the information-gathering satellites", a euphemistic appellation, were launched on the wings of "the fifth H-IIA rocket". Mr. Fukuda said: "From now on, it will

be necessary to conduct confirmation tests to check the function and capabilities of the satellites. And once in full operation, the Government of Japan considers that the satellites will strengthen the information-gathering capabilities required to ensure the safety of Japan".

Mr. Fukuda told Japanese journalists that today's development would not undermine the country's anti-war constitution. "We are not going to gather information to attack foreign countries or invade them", he underlined. However, even as the impression about Tokyo's limited yet new sense of strategic independence gained currency in the diplomatic quarters in East Asia, Japan's Defence Agency Director General, Shigeru Ishiba, told local reporters in Tokyo that "it is meaningful for us to obtain by ourselves information to ensure the peace, safety and independence of our country". While the accent on 'information' was designed to sustain the description of the satellites as "information-gathering" devices, Mr. Ishiba left little room for doubt about Japan's new agenda of space-based spying on neighbouring North Korea in particular.

The references to "peace and safety" of Japan are seen in the



Japan's H-2A rocket carrying the nation's first spy satellites lifts off from the Tanegashima Space Centre, on Friday. — AFP

regional diplomatic quarters as a transparent indication of the spying mission. Ahead of these political pronouncements, the

National Space Development Agency of Japan said that an H-IIA rocket, laden with the two satellites as the payload, blasted off without a glitch, in glorious weather, from the Tanegashima Space Centre at the appointed time, 10-27 a.m. On test was the fifth version of the indigenously developed launch vehicle, while the two satellites were placed in their initial orbit as programmed. Security in and around the Space Centre was very tight as never before in order to ward off any possible terrorist attack or indeed any other threat. Briefing journalists, Hatsuhsa Takashima, Press Secretary in Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that the "preliminary operation (of the satellites) would start in a month's time and the full operation would commence some time early next year".

CONFIDENTIAL

29 MAR 2003

# Japan backs U.S. action

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, MARCH 20. Japan today expressed support for the U.S. war on Iraq by arguing that Baghdad's "threat to the international community" deserved to be removed as a political priority.

In backing Washington, Japan has not only risked being in a minority of pro-U.S. states on this critical issue but has also spoken of the possibility of a new peace dividend after the present war.

The Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, said that Tokyo would take a lead in the reconstruction of a post-war Iraq while the removal of the current 'Iraqi threat' would in itself serve as the foremost peace

dividend. Even in the absence of any conclusive evidence of any Iraqi stockpile of weapons of mass destruction at this stage, Mr. Koizumi pledged that Japan "will take necessary measures for (the) disposal of weapons of mass destruction, for (the) disposal of mines at sea, and for the rehabilitation, reconstruction as well as humanitarian assistance in Iraq."

Taking note of the Japanese position, a Chinese Government Spokesman struck a cautionary note by stating in Beijing that Tokyo should exercise 'prudence' while seeking its presence felt on the international stage in any manner with any kind of military connotation.

Elsewhere in the Asia Pacific region, the Indonesian President, Megawati Sukarnoputri, said her government and people denounced the American action.

The Indonesian Foreign Minister, Hassan Wirajuda, later expressed the hope that such condemnation would not affect Indonesia's improving ties with the U.S.

Separately, the security authorities in Indonesia, the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, warned the anti-U.S. protestors against creating an "anarchic situation."

While anti-U.S. protest rallies were held in several Asia Pacific capitals, South Korea geared itself for steps against bio-terrorism.

## Call off campaign: China

By P. S. Suryanarayana

BEIJING, MARCH 20. China today asked the U.S. and its military allies to call off their war on Iraq and "return to the right path of seeking a political solution" to the crisis over disarming Baghdad of its suspected weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

By making such a "strong appeal" to the "relevant countries", China sought to readjust its sights on the U.S., now at war, after having taken care earlier to desist from denouncing Washington's plans for a strategic deviation from resolution 1441 of the U.N. Security Council.

In a subtle shift in emphasis, the new Chinese administration has not only expressed its "serious concern" over the American action but also questioned its legality under international law.

To a question from *The Hindu* about the U.S. tactics of projecting its ongoing war against Iraq as a global anti-terror campaign, the Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman, Kong Quan, noted that Washington's action was "not in conformity with resolution 1441". The significance of this comment is that China has cast doubts on the contention by the U.S. and its new military allies that the provision of "serious consequences" under resolution 1441 would legitimise a military strike against Iraq over its refusal to disarm.

## Chirac sees serious consequences

By Vaiju Naravane

PARIS, MARCH 20. Feelings against the invasion of Iraq are running high in France, where 86 per cent of the population is opposed to war.

Janine, a 60-year-old retired schoolteacher and her friends are busy painting banners for a large demonstration scheduled to take place outside the U.S. embassy in Paris later today. Police have mounted a major security operation and are planning to keep the demonstrators in the main place de la Concorde, a safe 200 yards away from the embassy building.

Stop this illegal war and "Bush — Assassin!" read some

of the placards. Her friend Susan interrupts vociferously: "There will be thousands of deaths. Is this international law? Tomorrow they could turn around and say to President Mugabe, to Arafat, to Brazil's President Lulla, to Cuba's Castro — we don't like your ideology, you are a tyrant and we are going to bring about "regime change" in your country. Where would that leave the world?"

Her thoughts, albeit couched in careful diplomatic language, were echoed by the President, Jacques Chirac, in an address to the nation today.

France, he said, "regrets this action undertaken without the approval of the United Na-

tions.... Whatever the duration of this conflict it will be heavy with consequences for the future."

Mr. Chirac said that all efforts must be made to make the war as short and as bloodless as possible.

He called for collective action in the framework of the U.N. for building peace in Iraq and elsewhere.

The acrimony between Britain and France did not appear to be on the wane. Mr. Chirac and the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, are to meet at a European summit in Brussels later today and diplomats expect them to indulge in a further exchange of harsh words.

## Sharon was told 'in advance'

JERUSALEM, MARCH 20. Keen to avert an Israeli involvement in the conflict to safeguard its fragile coalition, prevent escalation and limit pro-Iraqi identification in the Arab world, the United States has pledged to forestall a repetition of 1991 Gulf war attacks in which Iraq fired 39 Scud missiles at the Jewish state.

Senior Israeli officials on Thursday said that U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, gave the Prime Minister, Ariel Sharon, a 90-minute advance warning that the U.S. was to launch a volley of cruise missiles in the opening phase of the U.S.-led offensive.

A spokesman confirmed reports that U.S. President, George Bush, informed Mr. Sharon about the intended attack on Monday and that final confirmation had come in the Powell-Sharon conversation about an hour-and-a-half

before the offensive began.

Meanwhile, Mr. Sharon and his aides have expressed satisfaction over the U.S. decision to give Israel \$9 billions in loan guarantees over four years and \$1 billion in military aid, Israel Radio reported.

Israel has placed its air defence units on highest alert, preparing to intercept incoming Iraqi missiles with conventional or non-conventional warheads, an Israeli General said on Thursday.

Brig. Gen. Yair Dori, in-charge of Israel's air defences, said his units had been on the highest alert since Tuesday morning, though Israeli officials say chances are slim that Iraq will fire missiles at Israel in retaliation for the U.S. strikes on Baghdad.

## A mistake: Putin

By Vladimir Radyuhin

MOSCOW, MARCH 20. The Russian President, Vladimir Putin, condemned the U.S. military attack on Iraq and called on Washington to stop the war.

"Military action has been launched contrary to world public opinion and contrary to the principles and norms of international law and the U.N. Charter. There is no justification to this military action," Mr. Putin said. In a statement read at an emergency meeting of the Security Council on Thursday, Mr. Putin called the attack "a big political mistake."

"If we allow international law to be replaced by the right of might, this would jeopardise the principle of the sovereignty of

states," Mr. Putin said. "No country would feel safe and a big hotbed of instability that has emerged today will grow and cause negative consequences in other regions of the world. It is for these reasons that Russia is insisting on an early end to military action. We remain convinced that the pivotal role in defusing crises in the world, including in Iraq, must belong to the U.N. Security Council."

Russia will press for reverting the situation to the peaceful path and achieving a credible solution to the Iraq problem on the basis of the U.N. Security Council resolutions, consideration for the legitimate interests of the Iraqi people and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq.

21 MAR 2003

THE HINDU



# Japan expected to restore development assistance to India <sup>H10-12</sup> 7/1

By Amit Baruah

**NEW DELHI, JAN. 6.** The Japanese Foreign Minister, Yoriko Kawaguchi, is expected to announce the restoration of her country's overseas development assistance (ODA) to India to the levels that existed before the May 1998 nuclear tests conducted by New Delhi.

Ms. Kawaguchi, who arrives here tomorrow morning, will hold talks with the External Affairs Minister, Yashwant Sinha, and also visit the Japanese-assisted New Delhi Metro. On Wednesday, she is expected to call on the President, A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and the Prime Minister, Atal Behari Vajpayee.

An appointment has also been sought with the Deputy Prime Minister, L.K. Advani, Japanese sources said.

Ms. Kawaguchi had tried to visit India in June 2002, but the timing was not convenient to New Delhi because of the visit of the U.S. Deputy Secretary of State, Richard

Armitage, when Indo-Pakistani tensions were still high. The sources stressed that Ms. Kawaguchi, who is coming here from Sri Lanka, had decided to skip Pakistan during her current trip because she had to be back in Tokyo as the Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, would be in Moscow.

The purpose of the Foreign Minister's visit was to give a "fresh impetus" to the bilateral relations between Japan and India. Referring to the imposition of economic sanctions by Japan after the Indian nuclear tests, the sources said that it took till October 2001 to suspend the measures on account of opposition from hardliners within the Japanese Parliament.

The sources said there was a sense of frustration in the Ministry of External Affairs in New Delhi that the relationship had not moved forward in 2002, despite the visit by the Prime Minister to Japan in 2001. The focus of the Kawaguchi visit was to convince New Delhi that Tokyo attached con-

siderable strategic importance to ties with New Delhi. Japan was also keen on enhancing defence cooperation with India. A security dialogue at the official level had been agreed to.

The infrastructure sector was another area where there could be continued cooperation between Japan and India. Ms. Kawaguchi was likely to make a pledge on continuing assistance to the Delhi Metro project in its subsequent phases.

On the Pakistan-North Korea nexus, the sources said that Tokyo was extremely concerned about North Korean nuclear proliferation and was coordinating closely with the U.S. and South Korea on the issue. But it would prefer to wait for "hard evidence" as far as Pakistan's role in the affair was concerned.

Pointing to the limited influence that Japan had on North Korea, the sources said that Tokyo would have to ask Beijing and Moscow to use their influence with Pyongyang.

THE HINDU

7 JAN 2003

**JAPAN / PM VISITS CONTROVERSIAL SHRINE AGAIN**

# Koizumi action angers Beijing, Seoul

By P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE, JAN. 14.** Even as China today announced a new upturn in its strategic consultations with the United States, with a structured dialogue set to begin soon, Beijing's ties with another major power, Japan, came under intense pressure. The Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi's visit to the controversial Yasukuni shrine earlier in the day infuriated China (as also South Korea), with Beijing in particular seeing Mr. Koizumi's action as a further manifestation of Tokyo's insensitivity to the strategic concerns of its neighbours.

Mr. Koizumi, for his part, told the Japanese journalists at the shrine for the war dead (including some "war criminals") that China and South Korea should recognise that his third visit to the Yasukuni complex in Tokyo in less than two years would not in any manner alter Tokyo's foreign policy of seeking friendship with Beijing and Seoul. Mr. Koizumi underlined that he was only offering prayers in the New Year with a "wish for peace" being the thought uppermost in his mind. Mr. Koizumi's previous tours of the shrine took place on August 13, 2001, and April 21, 2002. The view from Beijing, though, was very different. Lashing out at Mr. Koizumi, the Chinese Vice-Foreign Minister, Yang Wenchang, said the visit to the shrine "undermines the political foundation of China-Japan relations". Mr. Koizumi's action ran counter to the Japanese Government's own commitment to face the reality check and "review" Tokyo's "history of aggression". Mr. Yang made these highly critical observations when he let the Japanese Ambassador to China, Koreshide Anami, know what Beijing thought



**Dressed in a black mourning suit, the Japanese Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi (left), follows a Shinto priest after paying homage at Yasukuni shrine, that honours Japan's war dead, in Tokyo on Tuesday. — AP**

of the episode. Mr. Yang conveyed China's "strong dissatisfaction and indignation".

The pernicious impact of the shrine visit should be corrected so that China-Japan relations could be brought back towards the track of "taking history as a mirror and looking forward to the future", Mr. Yang said. In Seoul, the South Korean President-elect, Roh Moo-hyun, expressed regret over Mr. Koizumi's action. Mr. Roh called on "leaders in the region" to "sincere-

ly discuss ways to establish friendly relations, given the annual repetition of (the) Japanese Prime Ministers' visits to Yasukuni and (given the) subsequent criticism from (Japan's) neighbouring countries (on each such occasion)". Tokyo's neighbours, more particularly China and South Korea, tend to see any political patronage of the shrine as a cultural equivalent of the diplomatic message inherent in Shintaro Ishihara's idea of a truly autonomous Japan that can say "no".

## Strategic dialogue

In the context of the international crisis over a "nuclearising" North Korea, an aspect that was not overshadowed by the Yasukuni episode, China today said the U.S. Under Secretary of State for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, John Bolton, would arrive in Beijing on January 20 to hold the first round of a new strategic dialogue on the bilateral front.

The dialogue was agreed upon during the Crawford Sino-U.S. summit last October, and the issues to be covered would include "strategic security, multilateral arms control and anti-proliferation", according to a Chinese spokeswoman, Zhang Qiyue.

Another top U.S. official, James Kelly, would also hold talks with the Chinese leaders on the North Korean issue, which acquired a international dimension today as a United Nations official, Morris Strong, and an Australian delegation arrived in Pyongyang for talks.

THE HINDU

1 JAN 2003