

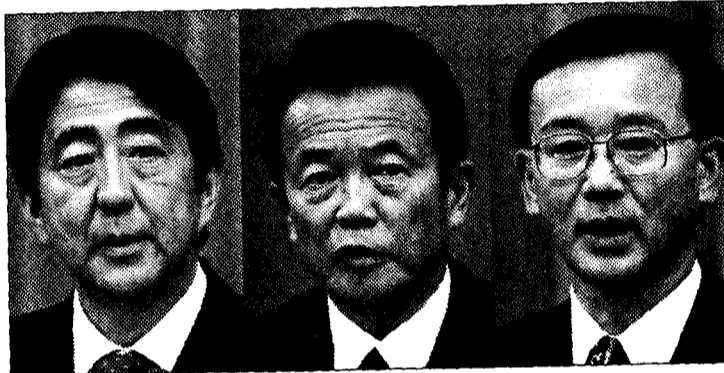
# Koizumi lines up his successors in Cabinet

Yomiuri Shimbun/ANN

TOKYO, Oct. 31. — Featuring three possible successors to himself in key posts, Japanese Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi reshuffled his Cabinet today for one last time before his planned resignation in September.

Chief Cabinet secretary Mr Shinzo Abe, foreign minister Mr Taro Aso and finance minister Mr Sadakazu Tanigaki all expressed their intention to run for the Liberal Democratic Party's presidency and thus become the Prime Minister next autumn during press conferences they held after being appointed to the new posts by Mr Koizumi.

"That's probably what I'm going to do," Mr Aso said when asked of his intention to run for the LDP presidency next year. He said Mr Koizumi probably would step down as he has repeatedly said he would do when his term as LDP president expires at the end of September, despite calls from within the party for him to continue because the party's landslide win in the 11 September general election was attributed to Mr Koizumi's huge popularity.



AND THE WINNER IS... (From left) Chief Cabinet secretary Mr Shinzo Abe, foreign minister Mr Taro Aso and finance minister Mr Sadakazu Tanigaki have all expressed their intention to become the next Prime Minister. — AFP

"Based on what he's been saying, it will be difficult to convince (Mr Koizumi) to change his mind and carry on (beyond September)," said Mr Aso, who was internal affairs and communications minister in Mr Koizumi's last Cabinet.

Mr Tanigaki, who was reappointed to the top finance job, said he was ready to tackle tax reforms, including the unpopular project of raising the consumption tax. "Tax reform will be an enormously important political issue for a long time to come. I want to contribute as much as I can, no matter what position I'll be taking," Mr Tanigaki said, hinting at his

willingness to become Prime Minister with tax reform as his pet project like postal reform was for Mr Koizumi.

The list of new Cabinet ministers was announced by Mr Abe, who previously was acting LDP secretary general and became the government's chief spokesman today. "I, like the Prime Minister, have been praying (at the controversial Yasukuni Shrine) both as a citizen and a politician. I'd like to continue that," Mr Abe, who often is described as most nationalistic of the top candidates to be the next Prime Minister, said about Mr Koizumi's visits to the war-related shrine in Tokyo.

THE MAN

O 1 NOV 2005

# Panel okays woman heir to Japan throne

Associated Press



EMPRESS-IN-WAITING?  
Princess Aiko with her mother,  
Crown Princess Masako.  
— File photograph

TOKYO, Oct. 25. — A Japanese government panel studying the imperial succession law will propose allowing women to ascend the Chrysanthemum throne, a news report said today.

The panel has been meeting for months on the issue of succession and make recommendations as a shortage of male heirs threatens to trigger a crisis unless the Imperial Household Law is changed.

Japan's imperial family, led by Emperor Akihito, has not produced a male heir in 40 years. Crown Prince Naruhito and Crown Princess Masako have one child, a 3-year-old daughter named Aiko.

Under the 1947 Imperial House Law, only males who have emperors on their father's side can succeed to the throne. Under that law, Princess Aiko cannot ascend the throne.

The advisory panel has issued interim recommendations that the law be changed to allow a female monarch, or possibly bring back members of the old aristocracy — or their offspring — forced from the imperial household in 1947 after Japan's defeat in World War II.

TKC 31-11-11

# Koizumi visit sparks anger

Tokyo, Oct. 17 (Reuters): China and South Korea protested angrily today after Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi paid homage at a Tokyo shrine for the war dead that its neighbours consider a symbol of Japan's militaristic past.

There were small demonstrations in Beijing, Hong Kong and Seoul, and Kyodo news agency reported that a meeting tentatively planned for later this week in Beijing between the Chinese and Japanese foreign ministers would not take place.

Japan's relations with Beijing and Seoul had already chilled because of the annual visits by Koizumi to Yasukuni shrine, where war criminals are honoured along with 2.5 million war dead.

Clad in a dark suit rather than the traditional Japanese

garb he has worn on some past visits, Koizumi bowed, put his hands together in prayer and stood silently in front of an outer shrine for a moment before striding back to his car in front of a crowd that had gathered in drizzling rain.

Escorted by security police, he used the public entrance and did not enter an inner shrine as in the past. Koizumi later said he had made the visit to pray for peace and that outsiders including foreign governments should not interfere in how Japan mourns its war dead.

"It's a matter of the heart," he said, adding that China and South Korea would eventually understand his intentions. But Chinese ambassador to Japan Wang Yi branded the visit a "grave provocation to the Chinese people".

"There is no doubt that (the visit) will damage Japan-China relations," Wang was quoted by Kyodo news agency as saying after meeting foreign minister Nobutaka Machimura.

Chinese foreign minister Li Zhaoxing called in Japan's ambassador to China to express Beijing's "strong indignation". China's foreign ministry said on its website. Japan's embassy in Beijing advised Japanese nationals to stay away from areas where there was potential for anti-Japan demonstrations.

South Korean foreign minister Ban Ki-moon summoned Japanese ambassador Shotaro Oshima to complain, and a presidential aide said President Roh Moo-hyun was unlikely to meet Koizumi for their semi-annual summit meeting this year.



Junichiro Koizumi (left) prays at the Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo while a protester (right) bites into a Japanese flag in Seoul. (Reuters, AP)

# Koizumi's shrine visit rapped

SF 2 11/10 2/12/04

Agence France Presse

TOKYO, Sept. 30. — A Japanese high court today ruled Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi's visits to a controversial war shrine as unconstitutional but rejected a damages claim for the war-bereaved families.

The Osaka High Court ruled that the visits to the Yasukuni shrine violated the constitutional separation of politics and religion, giving relatives of the war dead from Taiwan and other plaintiffs, a moral victory. But the court rejected a claim for 10,000 yen for each of the 188 plaintiffs, 60 per cent of whom are Taiwanese, for psychological damages.

It is the first ruling that the visits were unconstitutional since the Fukuoka District Court handed down a similar verdict in April 2004. The Taiwanese argued that they suffered mentally because their ancestors, who were conscripted by Japan under colonial rule, were enshrined at Yasukuni, which honours 2.5 million war dead, including some infamous war criminals.

Mr Junichiro Koizumi today asserted that he disagreed with a court ruling that his visits to a controversial war shrine were unconstitutional.



A lawyer shows a banner with "Unfair ruling" in front of the Tokyo High Court as it ruled against PM's shrine visit on Friday. — AFP

"I do not think my visits to Yasukuni shrine violate the Constitution," Mr Koizumi said in Parliament after a high court in western Japan said the visits contravened the constitutional separation of politics and religion. "It was not like I have made my pilgrimages as part of the Prime Minister's official

duties," he elaborated when asked to comment on the ruling.

The Osaka High Court ruling earlier today also rejected a claim of damages from relatives of the war dead from Taiwan and other plaintiffs, on the grounds that his visits to Yasukuni did not infringe on their individual rights.

# Koizumi pushes ahead with postal reform

Tokyo: Claiming a mandate for change, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi pledged in parliament on Monday to battle



vested interests in his campaign to implement reform after his cabinet approved his plan to privatise the sprawling postal service.

The government planned to submit the postal bills to a special session of parliament later in the day. A vote is expected sometime in mid-October, and the ruling coalition's strong majority following their landslide election win this month means the legislation should pass easily.

"I will solemnly accept the voice of the Japanese people and will be committed to realise postal privatisation," Koizumi told lawmakers, claiming wide public support for reform after the coalition's victory on Sep-

tember 11. "Without fearing pain, without being daunted by vested interests, without being bound by precedents, and with the cooperation from the Japanese people, I will assume my responsibilities as prime minister," he said. In his address, Koizumi reaffirmed the policies he has pushed for since taking office in 2001: structural reform, economic recovery while restraining public spending, and stronger relations with the United States, typified by his dispatch of noncombat forces in support of US-led troops in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Koizumi's programme was attacked during the campaign by the top opposition group, the Democratic Party of Japan, which opposed postal privatisation and vowed to withdraw troops from Iraq. But that message failed to resonate with voters. The focus this fall will be on the plan to split up Japan Post's delivery, insurance and savings deposit services and sell them off by 2017. Reuters

# Commanding presence

Sunday's election in Japan has been mistakenly described as a referendum on reform, as Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi was somehow able to frame the debate as the pro-reform Liberal Democratic Party versus the anti-reform others. More than a referendum on reform, the 11 September election was a national referendum on Mr Koizumi. Japan finds itself in the midst of a growing national crisis, and Mr Koizumi's overwhelming victory is fundamentally based on what the public perceives as his leadership style, not his platform. As part of his appeal stems from the strong stand he has taken with China, his landslide victory may not bode well for increasingly acrimonious relations between Asia's two giants.

Mr Koizumi, often sporting pastel shirts without a tie during the 12-day campaign, brought more than just a new style to Japanese politics. More importantly, he brought a new sense of boldness, defiance, and strength, at a time when the public was craving change. Like him or hate him, most Japanese respect Mr Koizumi's determination and many respond to his strong personal leadership and appeal. Whereas previous Prime Ministers were more likely to be compared to "cold pizza," Mr Koizumi reminded the public in the last month why they once waited for hours to buy a key chain with his face on it or hear him speak at a rally. When Mr Koizumi was rising to power, he was greeted by excited yells of "Jun-chan", as the electorate seemed to view him as a rock star. In this election, however, he was greeted by excited yet more deferential yells of "Koizumi-saan", a subtle reflection of the respect he has gained and increasingly commands.

Since coming to power, Mr Koizumi's image has changed from a sub-cultural to cultural phenomenon, having evolved in response to the demands of an electorate yearning for stronger, decisive leadership and Japanese identity and style in a period of increasing challenges. Curiously, foreign policy was almost totally absent from the pre-election debate. Some may perceive this as a sign that Japan is growing increasingly inward-looking, as Mr Koizumi simply wanted to limit the agenda to the single domestic issue of postal privatisation. This reading, however, would be wrong. Although difficult to detect since it was discreetly under the radar, one would contend that the China factor was actually one of the largest issues in this election, as more than any other factor, a rising China and its direct challenge to Japan set the context for the debate.

It is almost unthinkable to envision such a large LDP victory without considering the violent anti-Japanese demonstrations that swept

The ability to withstand China's direct challenge earned Junichiro Koizumi an election landslide, writes YOICHI FUNABASHI



Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi savours his election victory.

through China last summer and spring or Beijing's visible effort to block Japan's bid for a permanent UN Security Council seat. Mr Koizumi has been seen as "standing tall" against China, as he has postured himself as a *kizen*, or fearless, leader.

Although moderate and liberal Japanese – and even the majority of LDP supporters – express their opposition to and reservations about Mr Koizumi's continuous and contentious Yasukuni shrine visits, Japanese across the political spectrum resent what they perceive as the audacity of China's lectures on history and its gunboat diplomacy in the East China Sea. For the past several months, China has subjected Japan to public protests and lecture about admitting the historical truth about Japan's wartime atrocities. Just as Japan was gearing up to go to polls, the Chinese navy despatched five warships to the disputed area in the East China Sea, where a Japanese oil company was planning to drill for gas.

China's growth as an economic hub has been a mixed blessing for Japan, as much of

Japan's recent economic recovery rests squarely on the China boom, and yet the stronger China becomes economically, the more it will be able to transfer economic might into political and military clout.

Japanese realise this, and therefore accept the need to change their economy and raise their competitiveness. They are aware that vested interests and a burgeoning deficit have been bleeding Japan's vitality, and to deal with increasingly cut-throat competition with China, reform is necessary, although it's still unclear just how much Japanese are willing to pay for what level of reform. Mr Koizumi's landslide victory may in time prove to be the last gasp of the LDP, as the public likely holds unrealistic expectations of how much Mr Koizumi will be able to accomplish before he steps down next September. Mr Koizumi has been reaffirmed with a massive wave of popular support, but has not yet addressed what he plans to focus on after his single issue of concern: postal privatisation.

Agenda setting will be one of the most crit-

ical developments in Japan over the next year, as Mr Koizumi will have to choose between an increased focus on domestic policy ~ the Japanese public debt has risen to 160 per cent of GDP ~ or foreign policy, as relations with East Asian neighbours continue to worsen.

Although Mr Koizumi is now deciding how to use the political capital he has gained from such an overwhelming popular mandate, an effective transformation of this perceived political capital may prove to be elusive. Especially due to Mr Koizumi's strategy of appealing to metropolitan centres, young voters, and females, he has planted the seeds of a shift in the main LDP constituency base, but has in no way cemented it. The new voters Mr Koizumi courted are unlikely to demonstrate the same loyalty as the LDP's old, pork-barrel politics-stuffed rural political base. This factor is important ~ and worrisome ~ because for the LDP to maintain its appeal to the whimsical and floating metropolitan voters, its leaders will increasingly feel pressured to raise the stakes of what a bold, style-oriented leader must be.

A wise leader knows how to translate nationalism into reform, as Margaret Thatcher did, to some extent, in the wake of the British victory over Argentina in the Falkland Islands. Whereas Baroness Thatcher skillfully exploited that nationalistic sentiment and channelled it into a reform agenda, in Japan's case, the reverse may prove to be true, as Japanese leaders may unwisely attempt to channel popular support for a reform agenda into nationalistic sentiment. China may continue to embolden this type of pro-nationalistic leadership style in Tokyo, as Japan seems to be an ostensible exception to Beijing's peaceful rise strategy. The danger ahead, then, is the momentum that an increasingly strong, bold, nationalistic Premier would add to what seems like an increasingly possible collision course between China and Japan as they vie for the spot of East Asia's pre-eminent power.

Despite increasing economic interdependence, Japan and China seem to be driven more by passion and animus than economic rationality. Status, prestige, and pride are proving dangerous bedfellows for two nations consecutively vying for more regional predominance and maritime control. Although the inevitability of such a collision is far from assured, the months and years ahead will prove to be formative ones not only on Japan's domestic political culture, but on the implications for East Asian stability.

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THE STATESMAN

# Japan emerging as a more normal democracy

Ramesh Thakur

JAPAN'S ELECTIONS have been a stunning personal triumph for Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. His Liberal Democratic Party held 241 seats in the 480-seat Lower House, his New Komeito ally held 34, and the opposition Democratic Party of Japan 175. The ruling coalition has increased its tally to three times as many as the Opposition's: 296 for the LDP and 31 for New Komeito, against a mere 113 for the DPJ whose leader will resign to take responsibility for the devastating loss. The anti-reformists have been dealt a decisive defeat.

Japanese politics in the past has been about powerful factions within the LDP who brokered deals in party backrooms. While governments reigned, bureaucrats ruled. This is not to imply incompetence or venality in the bureaucracy. There is no question that Japan needs an efficient bureaucracy staffed by highly skilled and dedicated officials. Rather, the political wing of the government has been too weak in recent times, producing an imbalance in the politician-bureaucrat relationship. A confident, articulate, and popular Prime Minister can restore balance and add texture to the relationship.

In Western democracies, the big elections are fought over ideas, competing visions of the good life and concrete policies for its attainment. Many opposition parties — the Democrats under John Kerry in the last U.S. presidential election, the Conservatives in the U.K., and Labour in Australia against Prime Ministers Tony Blair and John Howard respectively — have discovered to their cost that simply opposing the government is not enough to attract voters. They must offer genuine alternative visions and policy platforms for the realisation of those visions.

Mr. Koizumi seems to have succeeded in breaking the mould of Japanese politics. Like Indira Gandhi against the Congress Party bosses

## Mr. Koizumi seems to have succeeded in breaking out of the traditional mould of Japanese politics and connecting directly with the people.

in the 1960s, Mr. Koizumi forged an effective alliance with the voters against the faction-filled politics of the LDP that produced a revolving door of Prime Ministers before he took office in 2001. His youthful looks, shock of wavy hair, and personal popularity with the voters gave him a much-needed buffer in the early years against party and factional heavyweights and potential challengers. But, of late, his reformist credentials had come under increased questioning.

Mr. Koizumi decided to gamble all on his postal privatisation bill. Japan Post, with assets of over \$3 trillion, is the world's largest financial institution. As well as providing employment to four lakh people, it has been seen as a source of funds for political patronage. Hence the opposition within the LDP.

When the privatisation bill was defeated by rebels within the LDP, Mr. Koizumi called their bluff and went to the polls. During the campaign he proved himself to be street smart, politically nimble, completely out-manoeuvring and wrong-footing his opponents both within and outside the LDP. He confronted and challenged the rebels and hounded them at the hustings by handpicking LDP candidates, including a number of women who became known as the smiling assassins. This was a public relations masterstroke, completely obliterating the traditional image of the LDP as a reactionary party full of men in dark suits and generating a frisson of excitement. Turnout was 67 per cent, significantly higher than the 60 per cent recorded last

time. And it helped to bring about a major realignment, garnering votes for the LDP from urban constituencies whereas its traditional stronghold has been the rural areas.

The DPJ was wrong-footed. Its chief attraction has been the alternative party that might actually reform the creaking and antiquated, patronage-driven political system. Instead it ended up having to explain voting against Mr. Koizumi's reform bill. It was trapped into being portrayed as an anti-reform party, a fatal flaw for a party founded as a reform movement and organisation. In retrospect it might have done better to have voted for the postal privatisation bill, burnished its reformist credentials, driven a stake through the heart of the LDP as a unified party, and presented itself as a responsible party of opposition rather than one that opposed the government for the sake of opposing.

The rout of the rebels and the defeat of the DPJ do not diminish the significance of the long-term trend of an emerging two-party system around the LDP and the DPJ. But the greater significance will surely be that it is a vivid affirmation of the political clout of appealing directly to voters in breaking the stranglehold of party bosses. Mr. Koizumi will be able to stamp his authority on the party and government agenda and policy, although he promises to abide by his decision to retire from the leadership of the LDP, and hence from the prime ministership, by the end of next year. By the same token, the solid majority takes away any remaining excuses for

failures to deliver on promises.

The government should come out of this more stable than at any time in the last decade. It will almost certainly be more assertive and self-confident in domestic affairs and more nationalist in foreign policy. Noises are already being made about cutbacks to contributions to the United Nations system. If Japan is not to be granted permanent membership of the U.N. Security Council, calls for a renegotiation of the terms of payment to the United Nations will mount so that Tokyo ceases to be the world's automatic teller machine. Instead, the existing five permanent members, in particular some who have opposed Japan's candidacy, will be asked to contribute more to reflect their exclusive status.

Bilateral and regional relations are likely to be subjected to similar hard-nosed reassessments. China and South Korea, as well as North Korea, may discover an unexpected toughness to the new Koizumi Government. He shows no signs of backing away from his controversial visits to the Yasukuni Shrine. While his intention is to pay respects to all those who gave their lives for Japan, the controversy concerns the few convicted class A war criminals from the Second World War who are also enshrined there. Since the Indian judge Radha Binod Pal at the Tokyo Tribunal dissented from assigning war guilt to Japan anyway, Indians might have more sympathy for Mr. Koizumi than do Chinese and Koreans.

### Ties with the U.N.

There is anger and puzzlement at Washington's refusal to support Japan's candidacy for the Security Council alongside the experience and memory of working with Germany, India, and Brazil in this common cause. Nevertheless, Japan is likely to see a better future for itself by consolidating relations with Washington and gradually giving up on a seemingly reform-proof United Nations. There is also the opportunity for India and Japan to build a substantial bilateral relationship that embraces political and security dimensions as well as trade and aid issues. Foreign aid might well become more targeted and focussed.

Japan is often urged to become a more normal country in foreign affairs, in the sense of acquiring an active foreign and security policy commensurate with its status as the world's second largest economy. It seems that Japan is becoming a more normal democracy, in that the ability of the Prime Minister to connect with the people has given him leverage in driving the political process by breaking through the apathy and cynicism of citizens. In Mr. Koizumi, telegenic populism has finally come to Japan.

To retain the confidence of the citizens, Mr. Koizumi must turn around the nation's economy. Japan has experienced more than a decade of economic stagnation (but is still fabulously wealthy and developed: India should be so lucky as to have Japan's economic problems!). With fast-paced globalisation and the growth of emerging economies like China and India, Japan faces a stiff battle for continued economic growth. International competitiveness is the key to such growth. According to annual rankings conducted by the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland, Japan ranked number one in international competitiveness in 1989-92, but slipped to 21st among the 60 countries surveyed last year. In the four categories measured in the survey, Japan ranked 35 and 40 for business and government efficiency respectively (3rd in infrastructure and 21st in economic performance, the other two categories).

The pain of serious structural reform is greater than anticipated, its duration longer than expected, and the gains less than predicted. A popular and determined leadership by government is essential to rescuing the ailing economy and coaxing and cajoling the people into supporting the transition and transformation.

(The writer is senior vice-rector of the United Nations University. These are his personal views.)

### CARTOONSCAPE



16/9

# Koizumi's decisive victory

10/10 2/1/00

**T**he victory of Japan's Liberal Democratic Party in the recently-held parliamentary elections means Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi can take up his proposed economic reforms without any opposition. Aside from reform, there was no issue in these mid-term elections, which Prime Minister Koizumi called after a group within the ruling LDP had voted in Parliament against his plan to privatise Japan Post. With assets of three trillion dollars through its banking and insurance arms, the post office provided the Government ready funds for a range of big infrastructure projects, which in turn earned the LDP much goodwill across a number of lobbies, from the construction to the agricultural sectors. It was not surprising that Mr. Koizumi described the elections as a referendum on the Japan Post reforms. It is now clear that Japanese voters back this plan, and the Prime Minister's agenda of economic reforms in general. A record 65 per cent turned out to vote, giving the ruling party and its coalition partner a two-thirds majority in the Lower House of Parliament. Although Mr. Koizumi's battle was primarily against the LDP rebels, his victory crushed the Opposition Democratic Party of Japan, which had hoped to benefit from the split in the LDP and to break its virtually-uninterrupted hold on power for half a century.

What is worrying about the overwhelming mandate for the LDP is that Mr. Koizumi may be emboldened to pursue some of his other policies that have caused worldwide concern. His annual visits to the Yasukuni shrine where the remains of 14 war criminals are interred along with those of others who died in the Second World War, have not just reopened war-time wounds for China and South Korea, where Japanese aggression caused immense trauma and suffering; they also carry the potential for causing serious instability in the region. This year, Mr. Koizumi avoided the August 15 pilgrimage but he did not say that he would never go again, sparking the speculation that he had only postponed the visit because he did not want to anger, on the eve of the election, his political allies who opposed his visits to the shrine. Also stoking fears of a remilitarised Japan is the LDP's other plan to change the country's post-war constitution in order to enable Japanese troops to use force abroad. Japan has no military, only "self-defence forces." The constitution bars the use of even the threat of military force to settle international disputes. Japan's deployment of troops to Iraq was the first since 1945 but they are still barred from using their weapons. Prime Minister Koizumi wants to change such pacifism. Considering the dangerous impact of these adventurist intentions on international relations, it would be wiser for the newly re-elected Japanese leader to refrain from a wider interpretation of his mandate in what was, all said and done, a single-issue election.

10/10/00

THE HILL



# A famous victory

*Japan* The message of Japan's 9/11 *9-11-11*

If Japan seemed to be on the turn a month ago, its 9/11 — the election date was amazingly coincidental — has placed the country decidedly on the road to momentous reforms. Even Junichiro Koizumi could never have wagered for so stunning a victory in what was reckoned as the most important general election since World War II. His risky gamble of dissolving Parliament hours after the Upper House had rejected his postal reform plans has paid off. The stability that he had imparted to governance ought to continue not least because of the two-thirds majority won by the Liberal Democratic Party in alliance with the New Komeito. His statements of intent must now translate into action as the election was essentially a virtual plebiscite on postal reform, a critical area of friction in Japan's tumultuous politics. It ought to help the Prime Minister smoothen out the rough edges in certain other spheres of governance as well, such as pension for the old. The verdict should also help him shore up foreign policy, notably the equations with China and South Korea and Japan's commitment on sending troops to Iraq.

Privatising the postal system has been widely showcased as Koizumi's "centrepiece reform" to revive the economy. Japan Post is often referred to as the world's largest bank. Koizumi is intent on opening the massive deposits to potential investors. A plan that had collapsed a month ago now seems set to materialise. That, as much as the wholly unexpected scale of victory, is the sum and substance of the verdict at the hustings. Koizumi's tenure as LDP president, which ends in a year, may well get extended. His victory becomes still more stunning when one reflects that he fought the election with a truncated LDP. Indeed, the party had floundered on the rock of postal reform, and the 37 dissenters, who had refused to go along with him on the privatisation plan, were barred from contesting. The split in the vote has not led to any psephological change, as generally anticipated by his opponents. Still less has it benefited the Democratic Party of Japan, the largest opposition group whose strength has slumped from 175 to 113. Koizumi has proved the Jeremiahs wrong.

9-11-11-11

THE STATESMAN



REUTERS

Japanese PM Junichiro Koizumi puts a rose on names of candidates at the LDP headquarters in Tokyo.

# Koizumi plans to quit

**GEORGE Nishiyama**  
Tokyo, September 12

PRIME Minister Junichiro Koizumi said on Monday he still planned to step down next year despite his party's landslide election win, raising the question of who would succeed one of the most popular leaders in Japan's history.

Some members of the ruling coalition said Koizumi should stay on after his term as president of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) ends in September 2006 to turn his popularity into votes for the upper house election due in the summer of 2007.

But Koizumi ruled out such a possibility. "I have said I have no intention of staying on as party president and prime minister (beyond Sept. 2006), and there is no change to

that," he told a news conference. "The LDP won 296 of the 480 seats in parliament's lower house, taking a majority in the chamber for the first time in 15 years.

Asked to characterise his successor, Koizumi said: "I am pinning my hopes on those who would take the reforms forward". Given that Sunday's election victory demonstrated popular support for Koizumi's plan to privatise Japan's postal system.

While most of those seen as potential candidates fit the reformer image, their views on diplomacy differ, and Japan's relations — especially with its Asian neighbours — could be affected variously depending on who takes the reins from Koizumi. Relations with Beijing and Seoul have deteriorated under Koizumi, largely

due to his annual visits to Tokyo's Yasukuni shrine, seen by many as a symbol of Japanese militarism before and during World War Two. Shinzo Abe, a rising star in the LDP with close links to the prime minister, constantly tops the list of lawmakers voters want to succeed Koizumi in media surveys.

Yasuo Fukuda, 69, the former top government spokesman. Fukuda has criticised Koizumi for not improving relations with China.

The 50-year-old, a political blueblood whose grandfather was a former Prime Minister and father a foreign minister, enjoys strong popularity especially among women for his soft-spoken manner but he is a Hawk on security policy, a favourite among LDP.

Reuters

SEP 13 2006 THE HONG KONG TIMES

# 129<sup>3</sup> Landslide victory for Japan's media-savvy maverick <sup>Sept 11</sup>

**Tokyo, Sept. 11 (Reuters):** Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's long-ruling party won a stunning landslide victory in today's general election, giving the US ally a broad mandate to press on with market-friendly reforms.

The Liberal Democratic Party was assured of winning 296 seats in the 480-seat chamber, Kyodo news agency said, the first time it had won a majority on its own in 15 years.

The LDP and its coalition partner, the New Komeito party, grabbed a total of 327 seats, up from 283 previously, allowing them to dominate the powerful lower chamber with a majority on all committees and override the upper house if need be.

The result was a striking victory for Koizumi, a media-savvy maverick who had gambled his career in a populist appeal to voters to back his plan to privatise Japan's postal system, a financial services giant that includes a postal savings bank and insurance business with a combined \$3 trillion in assets.

The 63-year-old Koizumi, a telegenic veteran with a knack for punchy slogans but a mixed record on implementing change, called the election after LDP lawmakers helped the opposition defeat bills to privatise Japan Post in the upper house.

"I have advocated postal reform for many years. The parliament said it was an absurd argument. The people have said it was the right thing," Koizumi, looking relaxed in a grey and white opened-necked shirt, said at LDP headquarters.

His decision to strip 37 LDP rebels of party backing and send what media called "assassin" candidates to take on the "traitors" created a buzz in the normally apathetic electorate, making the poll as much a referendum on Koizumi himself as on his policies.

"In the past, it seemed most things were down in backroom deals. That attitude seems to be changing," said Tokyo office worker Norihiro Ishihara, 28. "Koizumi is easy



**A girl slips her grandmother's vote into a ballot box at a Tokyo polling station on Sunday. (Reuters)**

to understand. It's not that I like Koizumi, it's just that I like his style."

The victory for Koizumi's two-party coalition will please Washington, where he is seen as a staunch friend for backing the US-led war on Iraq, and will be welcomed by investors

in Japanese financial markets, who want reform to stay on track.

"Koizumi Theatre", as the media called it, helped boost voter turnout to a record 67.5 per cent, against 60 per cent in the 2003 poll, Kyodo reported.

Koizumi, a silver-haired

maverick who crafted an image as an eccentric into a reputation as a reformer, has long promised to change the hide-bound LDP or destroy it in the attempt.

"It feels as if I have destroyed the old LDP and it is a new party," Koizumi said.

# Surveys predict Koizumi's win

Candidates step up campaign, party leaders appeal to voters through TV

**TOKYO:** Japan's ruling party is likely to win a majority of seats in parliamentary elections next week, propelled by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's popular push for postal reforms, according to media polls released on Sunday.

As candidates stepped up their campaigns on Sunday, party leaders appealed to voters through TV appearances.

Opposition Democratic Party leader Katsuya Okada accused Mr. Koizumi of neglecting more pressing issues, including the nation's ailing pension system and declining birth rate.

"Mr. Koizumi never talks about pension or taxes," Mr. Okada said. "He can't achieve reforms, and Japan will be destroyed. We're the ones who can do the real reforms."

A poll by the nationwide *Asahi* newspaper showed the ruling Liberal Democratic Party is likely to secure a majority in the 480-seat Lower House, while its main rival, the Democratic Party of Japan, could lose seats.

Although media polls predicted a victory for the LDP, they said uncertainty remained, with the *Asahi* reporting nearly 40 per cent of voters still undecided.

The *Asahi* poll showed the LDP could win about 255 seats, surpassing the 241 seats needed for a majority, while its coalition partner New Komei Party could slip to 28 seats from its current 34 seats.

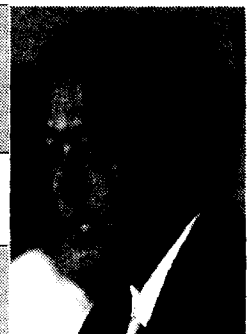
The Democrats may sink to 163 seats from their 175

## Reform at heart of Japanese election

Japanese voters will cast ballots on September 11 for some 1,130 candidates vying for 480 seats in the Lower House of Parliament. The key issue is Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's proposal to privatise the postal system, creating the world's largest private bank with assets of \$3 trillion



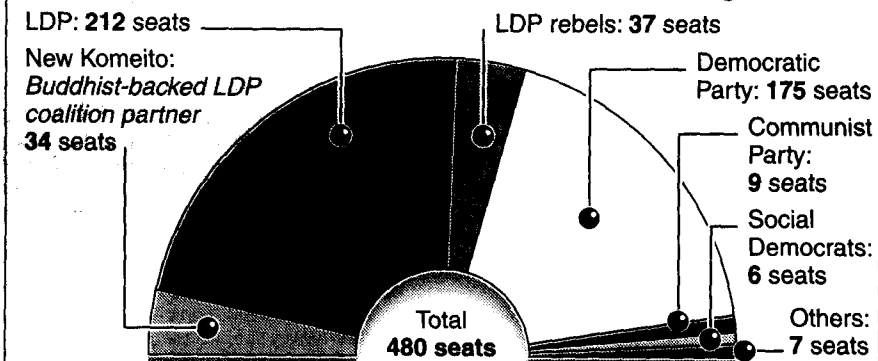
► Junichiro Koizumi, 63 (left)  
Says he will resign as Prime Minister if his Liberal Democratic Party-led coalition fails to win a simple majority



► Katsuya Okada, 52 (right)  
Leader of main Opposition Democratic Party of Japan

Other key issues: Japan's ailing pension system, economy, and role of Japanese troops in Iraq

### Balance of power when Lower House dissolved on August 8



### Talk of three possible scenarios is rife in Japanese political circles

**Scenario 1** LDP-New Komeito coalition secures majority in powerful Lower House. Koizumi stays on as LDP president and Prime Minister.

► LDP reintroduces postal privatisation bills to special session of Diet immediately after election

Liberal Democratic Party  
総裁選挙

**Scenario 2** Coalition fails to secure majority.

► Coalition forms new government with help of LDP rebels. New prime minister chosen

**Scenario 3** DPJ wins majority and forges government alone or with LDP rebels, Communists, socialists.

► Okada becomes next prime minister

Pictures: Associated Press

© GRAPHIC NEWS

seats. A survey by the *Nihon Keizai* business newspaper showed LDP candidates were gaining ground in urban areas. The survey also found support ratings for Mr. Koizumi were little changed at 47 per cent. Respondents picked Mr. Koizumi as most suitable for Prime Minister, beating Mr. Okada. - AP

# A snap election in Japan

10-10  
17/8

**P**rivatisation of state assets is a far from settled issue even in the world's supposedly most market-friendly countries, and the developments in Japan have just reiterated that forcefully. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's decision to hold fresh elections to the lower House of Parliament — two years ahead of schedule — came after members of his Liberal Democratic Party voted against a Bill to privatise Japan Post. That ensured the Bill was defeated in the upper House and exposed deep divisions within the party that had always managed to project a solid wall of consensus, whatever its internal differences. Although the LDP built its victory in the 2001 election around the reformist platform of Mr. Koizumi, who had just then taken over the party leadership, a section of the LDP opposed these pro-market economic reforms, but never openly, so far. The difference with the proposed privatisation of Japan Post is that it is not just any old state monopoly. Japan Post is estimated to hold as much as \$ 3 trillion in savings and life insurance accounts, which, if sold, would make it the world's largest private bank. The Government liberally uses these funds on big-ticket public works such as dams and roads, generating employment in the rural areas, and creating work for the construction industry, even if the schemes are sometimes opaque and unaccountable. The reforms that Mr. Koizumi had in mind would have unsettled the existing arrangements by splitting the post office network of 25,000 branches into four units under a state-controlled holding company, which would sell the savings and insurance accounts by 2017.

For the LDP, which has ruled over post-war Japan continuously save for a brief interruption in the 1990s, the easy government access to post office funds has been the road to political goodwill with lobbies that count. Prime Minister Koizumi nevertheless pushed ahead with the postal privatisation plans, convinced that freeing up the funds from state control was essential for the country's economy. To those who were opposed to it, the defeat of the Bill in Parliament is only small comfort. Mr. Koizumi exacted his revenge by dissolving the lower House and forcing his party to face an early election at which the prospects for the LDP, weakened by the battle within, are uncertain at best. The LDP has announced that it will field candidates against the rebels in the party. Although this could work to the advantage of the Opposition Democratic Party of Japan, Mr. Koizumi evidently hopes to ride back to power with a party purged of its dissidents, on the strength of the overall improvement in the health of the Japanese economy since he took over. The controversial Japanese leader has described the elections as a referendum on his reforms agenda. The outcome is of world-wide significance, both in its implications for the global economy and the way countries think about economic reform.

# Koizumi in snap poll gamble

Tokyo, Aug. 8 (Reuters): In the biggest gamble of his career, Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi called a September 11 election for parliament's lower house today in hopes of winning a new mandate for reform.

The decision to call a snap poll came after ruling party rebels in parliament's upper house joined the opposition to defeat bills to privatise Japan's vast postal system — the core of Koizumi's agenda for change. Koizumi is betting that a purge of those anti-reformers from the Liberal Democratic Party, which has ruled Japan for most of the past half century, will allow him to forge ahead.

"I see the rejection of the postal privatisation bills as a rejection of the Koizumi cabinet and the Koizumi reforms," the prime minister said. "I want to ask the Japanese people whether they say 'Yes' or 'No' to my reform agenda," he said. But the bitter split means the LDP could lose to the Opposition Democratic Party, a centrist party that argues it can succeed at reform where the LDP failed.

Koizumi ruled out cooperating with those who oppose

the privatisation bills and said he would step down if the LDP and its junior coalition partner, the New Komeito, failed to win a majority in the lower house. He said anti-reform lawmakers would not be approved as LDP candidates.

Koizumi sees postal privatisation as crucial to his broader goal of weaning the LDP from the wasteful public spending that won votes but spawned scandals and inflated government debt.

Economics minister Heizo Takenaka, who is in charge of postal reform, lamented the defeat of the bills to privatise Japan Post, which has \$3 trillion in assets including the world's biggest deposit-taking institution and a huge life insurance business.

"Postal system privatisation represented an important crossroads in terms of whether Japan opts for a small government or a big government," he said. "In that sense, I feel the rejection was a big loss for Japan's future and economy."

Some financial market analysts said the defeat meant that the reforms Koizumi had pledged to implement when he swept into power in 2001 would

be stalled, but others were less pessimistic.

"Koizumi tried to achieve reform within the LDP framework ... But he couldn't do that, so that means reform is only possible if there is a change in government," said Yasunori Sone, a political science professor at Keio University. The outcome of the vote ensures that the uncertainty that has hit Japan's markets in recent days will continue for a while.

Koizumi's cabinet had 47.8 per cent support, according to a public opinion poll conducted last weekend and published in the online edition of the *Yomiuri* daily today.

That was up slightly from July.

The yen and Japanese share prices fell when the results of the vote became known. But the Japanese currency quickly recovered all of its losses, and the Nikkei share average closed higher after falling 1 per cent ahead of the vote.

Media reported that more than 20 LDP upper house members had voted against the legislation. Fifty-one LDP lower house members had either voted against the bills.

## 100,000 SA gold miners go on strike

Johannesburg, Aug. 8 (Reuters): About 100,000 South African gold miners stayed off work today in the country's first industry-wide strike in 18 years to demand higher wages in the world's biggest bullion producer, their union said.

The gold miners' strike is the latest and biggest industrial action in recent weeks in a country plagued by huge income gaps between the rich and mostly black poor, more than a decade after the end of apartheid.

"The strike is 100 per cent countrywide, all our people, about 100,000 of them are on strike," Gwede Mantashe, general secretary of the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), said. The strike started across the country yesterday at 1600 GMT.

South Africa's gold industry accounts for around 15 per cent of total global output, and the mining sector contributes about 8 per cent to the nation's gross domestic product.

A strike would lead to the loss of around 28,000 ounces of gold production and \$12.21 million in lost revenue per day, an analyst has estimated.



Japan Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi at a press conference in Tokyo. (AFP)

# Koizumi vows to work for nuclear pacifism

Hiroshima victims of nuclear weapon remembered

P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE:** Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi on Saturday reaffirmed his country's adherence to the policy of nuclear pacifism, as the 60th anniversary of the American bombing of Hiroshima with an atomic weapon was observed there.

Mr. Koizumi, who participated in the solemn function that was held in memory of the victims of the world's first-ever use of a nuclear weapon, pledged commitment to Japan's "pacifist Constitution" too.

The three principles of Tokyo's policy of nuclear pacifism are the non-production of atomic weapons, non-possession of such devices and the non-placement of

nuclear weapons on Japanese territory. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, which was drafted by the U.S. after the end of the Second World War, forbids Tokyo from exercising the sovereign right of declaring war in the "national interest" and from participating in collective-security operations of an international kind.

Japan's recent action of sending troops for humanitarian work in aid of the U.S. forces in Iraq, under a legislative measure, has already redefined Article 9 for all practical purposes.

Mr. Koizumi's reported pledge of adherence to the Constitution acquires importance as a result of the ongoing public debate in Japan on a possible reform of the basic statute itself.

7/8  
Japan  
10-17

THE HINDU

# 'Japan for wider UNSC expansion'

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE  
TOKYO, JUNE 17

JAPAN said on Friday, it will continue to support wider expansion of the UN Security Council despite US backing for it to be included in a limited two-member enlargement of the UN organ.

Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura said he had received a telephone call from US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice after Washington said it favoured adding two permanent members to the Security Council including Japan, the *Jiji Press* news agency said.

"We cannot say 'that's right' and jump on to the US proposal as we have been in the G-4 campaign," Machimura was quoted as saying in reference to the so-called Group of Four—Japan, Brazil, India and Germany.

The Minister made the comment at a meeting of lawmakers about UN reforms early today, *Jiji Press* said.

The United States yesterday announced that it favoured limited expansion of the Security Council, saying it would next week propose specific criteria for candidate countries.

Washington rejected as unwieldy a proposal by Japan, Brazil, India and Germany to enlarge the council from 15 to 25 members, and opposed giving a veto to newcomers.

—PTI

## US looks at Iran gas pipeline issue 'constructively'

TV PARASURAM

WASHINGTON, JUNE 17

VOICING "concern" over the proposed Iran-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, the United States has said that it was sharing its feelings with the two South Asian nations in a "constructive" manner and not in a "negative way".

"We have communicated our concerns to both Pakistan and India about this, but we have very positive relations with Pakistan and India," US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice told reporters here yesterday, when asked how seriously or what degree of opposition America really has towards the 2600 km-long pipeline project.

Asked whether it was fair to say that the US was not likely to move towards sanctions if India and Pakistan were to go ahead with the pipeline project, Rice said: "Well, I think we are sharing our concerns in a constructive way with them and not in a negative way."

—PTI

27 JUN 2005

INDIAN EXPRESS



## স্থায়ী সদস্যপদ নিয়ে একলা প্রচারে জাপান, উদ্বিগ্ন দিল্লি

সীমা সিরোহি ● ওয়াশিংটন

২৫ মে: রাষ্ট্রপুঞ্জের নিরাপত্তা পরিষদে স্থায়ী সদস্যপদ পেতে এ বার চার দেশের জোট জি-৪-এর বাইরে শুধু নিজেদের জন্য সওয়াল করতে শুরু করল জাপান। এমন নয় যে তারা জি-৪ ছেড়ে বেরিয়ে গিয়েছে। কিন্তু জাপানের দাবি, প্রত্যেক দেশেরই উচিত নিজেদের জন্য সওয়াল করা। তাই তাদের কেন স্থায়ী সদস্যপদ পাওয়া উচিত তা বোঝাতে একটি পুস্তিকা প্রকাশ করেছে জাপান। তাতে জি-৪-এর অন্য দেশগুলির (জার্মানি, ভারত ও ব্রাজিল) উল্লেখ নেই।

পুস্তিকায় জাপানের এমন অনেক সাফল্যের কথা বলা হয়েছে, অন্য জি ফোর দেশগুলির পক্ষে কখনওই অর্জন করা সম্ভব নয়। যেমন পুস্তিকায় দাবি

করা হয়েছে, ১৯৯১ থেকে ২০০০ সাল পর্যন্ত রাষ্ট্রপুঞ্জের উন্নয়ন তহবিলে জাপানই সব থেকে বেশি টাকা দিয়েছে। বলা হয়েছে, রাষ্ট্রপুঞ্জের বাজেটে দ্বিতীয় বৃহত্তম অবদান জাপানেরই। শুধু ওয়াশিংটন বা নিউইয়র্ক নয়, আমেরিকার অন্যান্য গুরুত্বপূর্ণ শহরেও ঢালাও খাওয়া-দাওয়া এবং সাংবাদিক সম্মেলনের আয়োজন করে প্রচারের কাজ শুরু করেছেন জাপানি কূটনীতিকরা। সম্প্রতি অন্য জি-৪ সদস্যদের না জানিয়ে একটি প্রচার সভারও আয়োজন করে জাপান। সেখানে জি-৪ প্রসঙ্গ উঠলে জাপানি কূটনীতিকরা বলেন, জি-৪ রয়েছে ঠিকই। কিন্তু নিজেদের ব্যাপারটা তো শেষ অবধি নিজেদেরই দেখতে হবে।”

জাপানের এই আচরণে স্বাভাবিক ভাবেই উদ্বিগ্ন জি-৪-এর বাকি সদস্যরা। ভারতীয় কূটনীতিরা মনে করছেন, এ ভাবে কেবল নিজেদের জন্য প্রচার করে জি-৪ জি-৩-তে পরিণত করার দিকে এগিয়ে যাচ্ছে জাপান। তাঁদের বক্তব্য, শেষ অবধি হয়তো সবাইকেই আলাদা ভাবেই সওয়াল করতে হবে। কিন্তু আপাতত তো এক সঙ্গে চলার কথাই ছিল। নিরাপত্তা পরিষদের বিস্তার নিয়ে জি-৪ সম্মিলিত ভাবে যে প্রস্তাব রেখেছে তার খসড়া বিলির কাজ শুরু হয়েছে বলেও ভারতীয় কূটনীতিকেরা জানান। তাঁরা বলেন, জুলাই মাসে নির্বাচনের আগে আলাদা প্রচার করতেই হবে। কিন্তু এখনই বাকি সদস্যদের কিছু না জানিয়ে প্রচার করে জাপান জি-৪-এর উদ্দেশ্যকে কিছুটা ব্যাহত করছে।

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# Japan, China ties spiral downwards

Tokyo, May 24

AN OUTRAGED Japan said on Tuesday that China needed to learn better manners after it stood up Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, as relations between the Asian powers worsened over memories of World War II.

Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi on Monday abruptly cut short a goodwill visit to Japan by one day and cancelled a meeting she had requested with Koizumi, saying that she had pressing duties at home.

The Chinese foreign ministry later indicated that the reason was Japan's insistence on Koizumi visiting the Yasukuni shrine in Tokyo, which honours the war dead, including convicted war criminals.

"They suddenly cancelled the schedule but offered no word of apology. It is understandable if they have urgent matters but they should know society just does not function without saying 'I'm sorry'," foreign minister Nobutaka Machimura told a news conference.

"I thought China was a country that values manners. I am very sorry to think that they must have forgotten such things," education minister Nariaki Nakayama said.

His ministry last month caused an uproar in China and South Korea after approving a nationalist history textbook seen as playing down atrocities by Japanese forces during World War II. The textbooks set off major protests in China that damaged Japanese diplomatic property and also denounced Tokyo's cherished bid for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council.

The two countries have since used a series of meetings to patch up relations. Japan and China are major trading partners and Wu was careful to keep her appointments with industry leaders.

AFP

25 MAY 2005

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

# Japan to resume yen loans to Pakistan

**Aid signals support for Musharraf's fight against terror**

B. Muralidhar Reddy

**ISLAMABAD:** Japan on Saturday announced the resumption of yen loans for infrastructure development in Pakistan. Aid was suspended after Pakistan tested a nuclear weapon in 1998.

Tokyo's decision to revive the programme was announced by the visiting Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi, at his meetings with the Pakistan President, Pervez Mushar-

raf and the Prime Minister, Shaukat Aziz. The details of the programme are yet to be announced.

The resumption of the yen loans is expected to substantially boost the infrastructure development in Pakistan. Islamabad was one of the biggest recipients of the Official Development Assistance (ODA) averaging about \$500 million a year till it was suspended after the nuclear tests.

In line with the American policy of

economic assistance to Pakistan after the September 11 incidents, Japan released a grant of \$300 million to Islamabad and rescheduled Pakistan's debt amounting to \$4.5 billion. However, it did not resume yen loans.

In the course of the current visit by a Japanese Prime Minister, taking place after a gap of five years, Tokyo wants to send a clear signal that it is fully behind Gen. Musharraf in his "international war against terrorism."

01 MAY 2005

THE HINDU

# 56 die as Japan train slams into building

## Girls 'forced into conflict'

### WORST RAIL ACCIDENT IN 40 YEARS

Reuters  
Amagasaki, April 25

A CROWDED Japanese commuter train derailed on Monday and hurtled into an apartment building, killing at least 56 people and injuring hundreds in the country's worst rail accident in over 40 years.

Workers struggled into the night to rescue people trapped in crumpled wreckage and twisted metal in the first-floor car park of the building, located just six metres from the tracks in an Osaka suburb.

"From what rescuers have been able to see, at least four people are believed alive", a fire department spokesman said. "But the train is very badly crushed and it's hard to tell much more than that. We cannot deny that others may be in there".

NHK television said one of the four was unconscious. Officials said they did not know the cause of the crash, which took place shortly after the morning rush hour. But passengers said they felt

the train, which was late leaving the previous station, had been moving faster than normal.

Around 400 people were taken to hospital. Five of the train's seven cars derailed in the accident. The train was carrying about 580 passengers when it crashed into the building in Amagasaki, west of Osaka.

Rescuers in hard hats clustered near the twisted remains of the front two cars, one of which had been smashed to less than half its normal width, using cutters and ladders to get inside. Railway officials said that calculations had shown that a train could derail if it was travelling at nearly twice the speed limit at the site where the accident occurred.

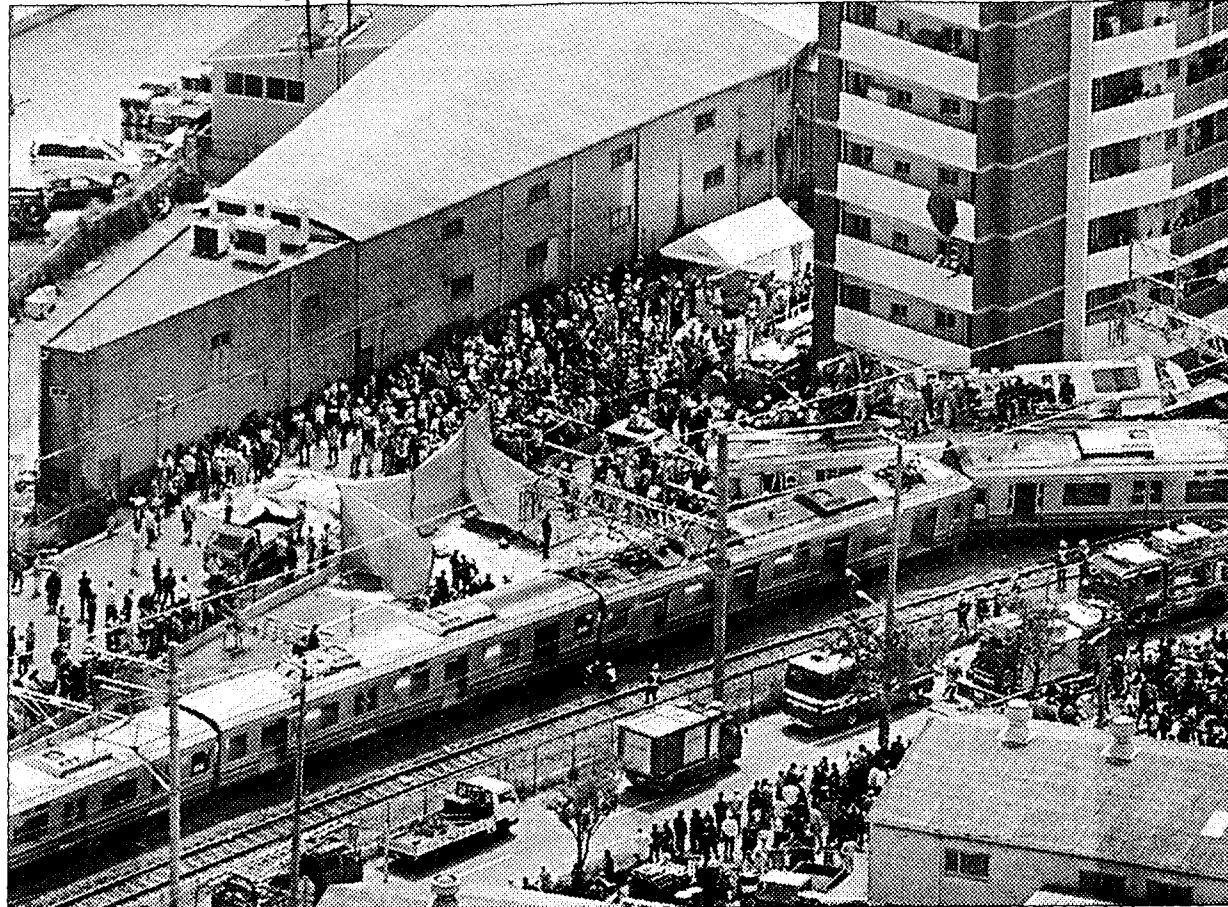
Passenger Tatsuya Akashi, who had been on his way to work, told NHK that it felt as if the train had speeded up as it went around a curve. "I thought there were some strange swings, and then the train derailed. No one knew what happened and everyone kept screaming", he said.

It was the worst train accident in Japan since 1963 when about 160 people were killed in a multiple train collision at Yokohama, near Tokyo.

Soldiers from Japan's Self-Defence Forces were sent to the scene to help with rescue efforts. Operator West Japan Railway Co. said the cause of the derailment was under investigation but it confirmed that the train had over-shot the station at its previous stop.

"The priority for now is to rescue the passengers", West Japan Railway president Takeshi Kakiuchi told a news conference. Company officials said the train's driver was a 23-year-old man with 11 months' experience who had over-shot another station last year. His fate was unknown.

Japanese trains have a good safety record. In Japan's last major accident, in March 2000, five were killed and 33 were hurt when a Tokyo subway train ripped away the side of a carriage of an oncoming train that had derailed.



A crowd watches as firefighters rescue trapped passengers at the accident site on Monday.

Agence France-Presse  
London, Apr. 25

MORE THAN 120,000 girls and young women have been forced into conflict around the world, and almost half of all child soldiers are female, a report by a British-based charitable organisation said on Monday.

Up to 40 per cent of the estimated 300,000 children who are soldiers or otherwise involved in war around the world are female — some as young as eight, Save the Children said in a report.

Many of the girls came from Africa and Asia, notably places such as Sri Lanka and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the charity said in its report titled *Forgotten Casualties of War: Girls in Armed Conflict*. "When people speak of child soldiers, the image conjured up is of boys", Save the Children UK director general Mike Aaronson said in an introduction to the 38-page study.

"Nearly half of all children associated with armed groups are girls. Used as active combatants, porters, cleaners, cooks and sexual possessions, they are less visible than boys", he added.

# Japan to extend 'anti-terror mission' in Indian Ocean

Japan 24/4  
80-9

## Tokyo's bid to raise its profile in the global fight against terrorism

P. S. Suryanarayana

**SINGAPORE:** Japan has decided to carry forward the activities of its Maritime Self Defence Force (MSDF) in the Indian Ocean region, in support of the U.S.-led 'anti-terror' coalition in Afghanistan, beyond the present deadline of May 1.

The planned extension by six months will be co-terminus with the extended validity of a relevant special law under Japan's 'pacifist' Constitution.

Japan's new act of raising its profile, even if timed in the context of a looming expiry date for the current operations in the Indian Ocean area, acquires importance in the unfolding context of a zooming focus on Tokyo's new proactive role of 'peace-building' on the international stage.

As an active participant in the operations related to the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative, Japan's MSDF is already a maritime player outside its immediate environment.

The MSDF, as Japan's Navy is designated under the country's 'anti-war' Constitution that dates back to the MacArthur era, has been performing 'non-combat' tasks such as

• **Validity of special law to be extended**

• **Over 500 refuelling operations carried out**

• **Already engaged in Afghanistan, Iraq**

logistic support for the U.S. and other military forces that are carrying out a variety of offensive operations inside Afghanistan.

Official statistics show that Japan has, until the end of last month, carried out over 500 refuelling operations in aid of military vessels from 11 countries including the U.S. The Japanese ships have also used Indian port facilities for purposes with no combat connotation.

Japan's initial participation in this 'anti-terror' mission predates the Prime Minister, Junichiro Koizumi's controversial despatch of units belonging to all the three wings of the SDF in aid of the U.S.-led military forces in Iraq.

The SDF units in Iraq, engaged in 'reconstruction' activities not amounting to actual combat duties, have been functioning under Japan's own chain of national command since the recent "transfer of sovereignty" to the Iraqi people.

Announcing the latest move, the Director-General of Japan's Defence Agency, Yoshinori Ono, said at a news conference in Tokyo on Friday that "as a member of the peace-loving international community and within the framework of international cooperation, it is but natural that we do all we can to eradicate terrorism."

The special two-year law, providing for such 'logistical' support to the U.S. by means of an actual deployment of Japanese naval vessels in the Indian Ocean area, in October 2001, marking the first time ever that Tokyo took a proactive military step outside the framework of the United Nations peace-keeping missions.

This law, not to be confused with a subsequent special legislation for Japan's military involvement in Iraq, was first passed in the context of the terrorist blitzkrieg against U.S. targets in September 2001.

24 APR 2005

THE IRRAWADDI

KOIZUMI EXPRESSES REMORSE FOR TOKYO'S AGGRESSION DURING WORLD WAR II

# Japan apology calms China

Kavi Chongkittavorn  
in Jakarta

April 22. — China has responded positively to Japan's expression of "deep remorse and heartfelt apology" saying that it was made in a multinational forum, according to an informed source.

The source, who attended the bilateral meeting between Indonesian Prime Minister, Mr Thaksin Shinawatra, and Chinese President, Mr Hu Jintao, today said Mr Thaksin asked Mr Hu about his thought on Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Junichiro Koizumi's speech made at the opening ceremony of the Asian-African summit.

"Mr Hu said that it was the first time that Japan has made the statement in an multilateral forum," the source quoted the Chinese leader as saying.

The Thai delegation has taken the answer as a positive response to Mr Koizumi's speech. It was the first time that China has made a positive answer to the Japanese government's enquiries over the anti-Japanese demonstration in Chinese cities.

In the second paragraph of his speech, he referred to its colonial rule and aggression which caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly those of Asian nations.

"Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility. And with feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind," the speech said in part.

Mr Koizumi's apology did not go beyond what Japanese leaders previously have said, but its deliv-

## Shrine visit

TOKYO, April 22. — In a move that contrasted with Mr Koizumi's conciliatory comments, 80 Japanese lawmakers today visited the controversial Yasukuni Shrine here, which is dedicated to the nation's war dead. There were, however, no Cabinet ministers among the group, which visited the shrine in observance of an annual spring festival. Aides representing several dozen other lawmakers also attended. Expressing "strong dissatisfaction" over the "negative actions of some Japanese politicians", the Chinese foreign ministry called on Tokyo to take actions that are "more conducive to improving and developing Sino-Japanese relations". — AP

ery at the conference clearly was aimed at easing an escalating row with Beijing over Tokyo's handling of its wartime atrocities and its bid for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

Mr Koizumi has asked for a summit with Mr Hu at the Asian-African Summit to discuss their current tension over the wide spread violent demonstration against Japanese interests in China. But so far China has not yet given a precise answer. However, after this positive response, the Thai source said that the summit would be scheduled either tomorrow or on Sunday morning before Mr Hu leaves for a state visit to the Philippines.

Japanese foreign ministry spokesman, Mr Hatsu-hisa Takashima, said China has shown restraints and urged the Chinese to refrain from violent activities. — The Nation/ANN



Mr Junichiro Koizumi stands with Asian ministers at the venue of the Asian African Business Summit in Jakarta on Friday. — AFP

## Manmohan, Pervez meet at dinner

Press Trust of India

JAKARTA, April 22. — Close on the heels of their productive talks in New Delhi, Dr Manmohan Singh today interacted with President Pervez Musharraf at a dinner hosted by Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono in honour of leaders of African and Asian countries attending a summit here.

The Prime Minister, along with his wife Mrs Gursharan Kaur, walked up to Gen. Musharraf and his wife Mrs Sehba, and they exchanged greetings.

The two leaders were then seen discussing some issue which is understood to have been related to their talks in New Delhi.

Earlier today, Dr Singh said the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership Declaration to be signed at the Asian-African Summit in Jakarta would be a "forward-looking framework" intended to build a bridge of understanding and support among the two continents.

"We would sign a Declaration on a New Asian African Strategic Partnership renewing and reaffirming our commitment to the values enshrined in the original Bandung Conference", the Prime Minister said.

Dr Singh said he would also be attending the Commemoration of the Golden Jubilee of the Asian-African Conference to be held in Bandung on 24 April.

# Koizumi sorry for war past

**Jakarta, April 22 (Reuters):** Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi apologised today for Japan's wartime past and said he wanted to meet Chinese President Hu Jintao in a bid to repair ties between the Asian giants, at their worst in over 30 years.

Koizumi, speaking after making the apology in front of world leaders at a multilateral forum, said he would meet Hu tomorrow on the sidelines of the Asia-Africa summit in Jakarta.

However, China said it could not confirm the talks would take place. Koizumi's spokesman told a late night news conference that both sides wanted the meeting to take place, but added officials were having problems scheduling a time.

"Nothing is produced by antagonism," Koizumi said. "Friendship is most impor-

tant. I would like to hold the meeting from that perspective." Asked if he would meet Hu tomorrow, Koizumi said: "I've been told that we will hold it tomorrow."

But Kong Quan, a spokesman for the Chinese foreign ministry, said in Jakarta: "We can't confirm (it). The foreign ministries of the two countries are still talking."

Relations between the two Asian powerhouses have been at the worst in decades following violent anti-Japan demonstrations in China over school history textbooks which critics say sugarcoat its wartime history and other irritants.

The spat puts at risk economic ties worth \$212 billion in annual trade.

Addressing the gathering of leaders from 100 Asian and African countries including Hu, Koizumi earlier apolo-

gised for the pain inflicted by Japan.

"In the past, Japan, through its colonial rule and aggression, caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people of many countries, particularly to those of Asian nations," he said.

"Japan squarely faces these facts of history in a spirit of humility," he said, adding the Japanese people have engraved in their minds "feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology."

The apology mirrors past statements by Tokyo but such an admission in front of foreign leaders is rare. "We welcome that he made known his stance... More important, he should follow it up with action," Kong, the Chinese spokesman, said without elaborating.

Thousands have demonstrated in cities across China

the past three weekends in violent protests against the Japanese textbooks and against Tokyo's campaign for a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.

In a sign of how easily ties can be affected, a Japanese cabinet minister and 80 other parliamentarians paid their respects today at a war shrine that has become a symbol of the animosity, prompting an angry response from Beijing.

"Sino-Japanese relations are facing a grim situation, and we express our strong dissatisfaction for some Japanese political personnel's negative behaviour in disregarding the general situation," the Chinese foreign ministry said in a statement in Beijing.

Ties with China chilled markedly after Koizumi took office in 2001 and began annual visits to the Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo.



**Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in Jakarta. (Reuters)**

# অতীত নিপীড়নের জন্য আন্তর্জাতিক মঞ্চে ক্ষমাপ্রার্থী জাপান

জাকার্তা, ২২ এপ্রিল: উপনিবেশিকতা আর আগ্রাসনের জন্য ক্ষমা চাইল জাপান। দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধের আগে ও বিশ্বযুদ্ধের সময়ে এশিয়ার বিভিন্ন দেশে নিপীড়ন চালানোর জন্য যখন 'গভীর দুঃখপ্রকাশ' করছেন জাপানের প্রধানমন্ত্রী জুনিচিরো কোইজুমি, শ্রোতার আসনে তখন শ'খানেক দেশের প্রেসিডেন্ট, প্রধানমন্ত্রী, রাজা ও সামরিক শাসক। শ্রোতার ভূমিকাতাই এই ক্ষমাপ্রার্থনার সাক্ষী থাকলেন চিনের প্রেসিডেন্ট হু জিনতাও-ও।

উপলক্ষ এশিয়া-আফ্রিকা শীর্ষ সম্মেলন। উদ্বোধনী আসরে বলতে উঠে তাঁর দেশের পুরনো কৃতকর্মের জন্য ক্ষমা চান কোইজুমি। অবশ্য নিজেদের ইতিহাসের জন্য জাপানের এমন ক্ষমাপ্রার্থনা নতুন নয়। দুঃখপ্রকাশের ভাষাতেও অভিব্যক্তি নেই। কিন্তু বলার মতো ঘটনা হল, দুঃখিত হওয়ার স্থান আর কাল। বেজিং, সাংহাই-সহ চিনের বিভিন্ন শহরে গত কয়েক সপ্তাহ ধরে চলছে প্রবল জাপান-বিরোধী বিক্ষোভ। যুদ্ধকালীন জাপানি অত্যাচারের স্মৃতি এখনও পীড়া দেয় চিনের

মানুষকে। সেই স্মৃতিকেই আরও উজ্জ্বল দিয়েছে জাপান সরকারের অলমোদিভ ইতিহাসের নতুন পঠাবই। অত্যাচারকে লম্বু করে দেখিয়ে জাপানি সেনার ভূমিকাকে মহিমায়িত করে তোলা হয়েছে বলে চিনের অভিযোগ। এই ক্ষোভ থেকেই দুঃভাবসহ জাপানের সঙ্গে সম্পর্কিত নানা প্রতিষ্ঠানের সামনে প্রতিবাদ করছেন চিনের মানুষ। রাষ্ট্রপঞ্জের নিরাপত্তা পরিষদে স্থায়ী সদস্য হওয়ার জন্য যে মরিয়া চেষ্টা চালাচ্ছে জাপান, সেই প্রয়াসেরও বিরোধিতা করেছে চিন এবং পেরু ইতিহাসের দেহাই দিনেই।

এমন একটা উত্তপ্ত বাতাবরণে কোইজুমির ক্ষমাপ্রার্থনা রাজনৈতিক ভাবে অত্যন্ত তাৎপর্যপূর্ণ বলেই মনে করছেন বিশেষজ্ঞেরা। এতে যেমন চিনের সঙ্গে সম্পর্ক উন্নত করার প্রয়াস নেওয়া গেল, তেমনই আবার বিশ্বনেতাদের সামনে বুঝিয়ে দেওয়া গেল, তুল শুধুরে আন্তর্জাতিক রাজনীতির নতুন সন্নিকরণ মেনে চলাতে জাপান কতটা আন্তরিক। লক্ষণীয় বাপার হল,

জাকার্তার মঞ্চে জাপানি প্রধানমন্ত্রী। -রয়টার্স

দুঃখপ্রকাশ করতে গিয়ে কোইজুমি কিন্তু চিনের নাম করেননি। বলেছেন, 'এশিয়ার দেশগুলির

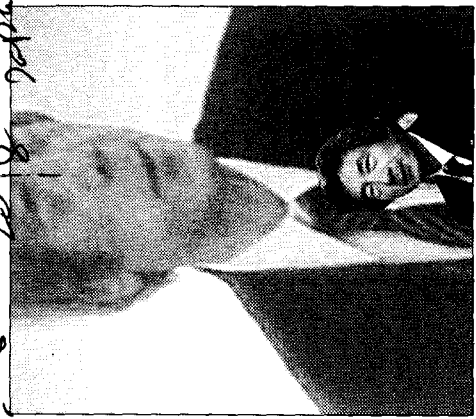
ক্ষমা। তবে ধরেই নেওয়া হচ্ছে, এতেই চিন ও দক্ষিণ কোরিয়ার ক্ষোভ কমবে। কালই জাকার্তা সম্মেলনের অবসরে মুখোমুখি হতে পারেন কোইজুমি-জিনতাও। এখন এই সাক্ষাতের দিকে নজর রাখছে গোটা বিশ্বই। মজা হল, প্রবল জাপান-বিরোধী বিক্ষোভ ও হিংসার জন্য চিনকে ক্ষমা চাইতে বলেছিল জাপানই। চিন কর্তৃপক্ষ করেনি। শেষমেশ উল্টে জাপানই ক্ষমা চাওয়ার পথে হাটল। কোইজুমি বলেন, "অতীতে জাপানের উপনিবেশিক শাসন এবং আগ্রাসনের জন্য অনেক দেশকে, বিশেষত এশিয়ার দেশগুলিকে, ভয়াবহ কষ্ট ও ক্ষতি স্বীকার করতে হয়েছে। অত্যন্ত বিনীত ভাবে জাপান ইতিহাসের এই তথ্য মেনে নিচ্ছে। গভীর দুঃখ এবং ক্ষমা চাওয়ার আন্তরিক মনোবৃত্তি জাপানের ছিল বলেই দ্বিতীয় বিশ্বযুদ্ধের পরে তারা সামরিক শক্তি না-থেকে অর্থনৈতিক শক্তিতে রূপান্তরিত হয়েছে।"

পঠাবই-বিতর্ক যেমন কোইজুমির বক্তৃতায় আসেনি, পরে বলতে উঠে সে প্রসঙ্গে যাননি

জিনতাও-ও। তিনি বলেন, "বিশ্ব শান্তি ও উন্নয়ন ধরে রাখাই চিনের বিদেশনীতির উদ্দেশ্য।" তবে পরে চিনের বিদেশমন্ত্রকের এক মুখপাত্র সাংবাদিকদের বলেন, "৩০ বছর আগে চিন-সহ এশিয়ার বিভিন্ন দেশের ব্যাপক ক্ষতি করেছিল জাপান। কোইজুমির এই মনোভাব আমরা স্বাগত জানাচ্ছি।"

প্রেসিডেন্ট যা-ই ভাবুন, কোইজুমির দুঃখপ্রকাশে অবশ্য চিনের আম জনতার মন গলেনি। আজই জাপানি যোদ্ধাদের স্মৃতিস্তম্ভিত ইয়াসুকুনি ম্যারক ঘুরে দেখতে গিয়েছিলেন জাপানের পালটিমেন্টের সদস্যেরা। এতেই যথেষ্ট ক্ষোভ তৈরি হয়েছে চিনে। ইন্টারনেটের বিভিন্ন সাইটে জাপানের প্রতি ঘৃণা যেমন উপচে পড়ছিল, তেমনই পড়ছে। 'কথায় কিছু হবে না, লিখিত ভাবে ক্ষমা চাক'।— এই ধরনের মন্তব্যই শোনা গিয়েছে। স্মরণীয় পরিষদে আসনটাই অর্পাল লক্ষ্য, জেটীও রাখতাক না-করে বলে দিচ্ছেন অলোকে।

বহু বছরের ক্ষত কি শুকনো কণ্ঠস্বয়? — রয়টার্স, এ-এফ পি



২২ ৪ ২০০৫



# JAPAN PANEL MOOTS CHANGING STATUTE Revisionist roll

The Yomiuri Shimbun/ANN

TOKYO, April 15. — A Japanese parliamentary committee today endorsed a landmark report that urges revisions to the country's post-World War II Constitution, including changes to its pacifist provisions.

The House of Representatives Research Commission on the Constitution today adopted a final report on its five years of discussions, saying many committee members were in favour of amending the supreme law.

About two-thirds of the members felt the nation should be allowed to exercise the right to collective self-defence, saying either "the right should be acknowledged" or "the right should be acknowledged, but restricted".

Mr Taro Nakayama, who chaired the commission, later submitted the report to lower house Speaker Mr Yohei Kono.

The 683-page report, approved by the Liberal Democratic Party, New Komeito and Minshuto (Democratic Party of Japan), covered 452 hours of discussions that showed many commission members supported amending the Constitution.

In the preface, Mr Nakayama wrote: "There has been a dichotomy between what is stipulated in the Constitution and reality," citing Article 9 of the Constitution, which bans possession of military potential.

"Public confidence in the Constitution could be forfeited," Mr Nakayama wrote. "From the point of view that the Constitution is for the people, it's a serious problem."



The Koizumi government favours amendments to the Constitution's pacifist provisions. — AFP

## China reins in rioters

David McNeill in Tokyo

April 15. — After a week of megaphone diplomacy that stretched ties between China and Japan to breaking point by disputes about history and territory, Beijing has cracked down on anti-Japanese protesters in an apparent attempt to defuse a movement it fears could spiral out of control.

Beijing authorities said any attempt to repeat last weekend's attacks on the Japanese embassy and Japanese-owned property would be "considered illegal behaviour".

A government spokes-man said: "We hope people and young students can trust that the party and the government can properly deal with Sino-Japan relations ... and do not do anything that will affect social stability and hurt the capital's image." The British and other governments pushed to persuade China to quell the protests before they got out of hand. — The Independent

16 APR 2005

THE STATESMAN

# Koizumi backs India's UNSC bid

Agence France Presse

TOKYO, April 14.— Ahead of his state visit to India this month end, Japanese Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi stressed the need to reform the United Nations and supported New Delhi's view that the two Asian countries be made permanent members of the UN Security Council.

"The United Nations is needed to be reformed so that India and Japan become permanent members of Security Council," Mr Koizumi said during his 40-minute meeting with visiting Indian com-

## Pakistan says no India; China says no Japan

BEIJING/ISLAMABAD, April 14. — While China opposes Japan becoming a permanent member of the Security Council, Pakistan has claimed that China supported its stand that its expansion should not be country-specific.

"We hope that Japanese side will fulfil its promise to seriously re-examine its history of aggression," Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Mr Qin Gang said today. Pakistan today reiterated its opposition to India's bid for a permanent UNSC seat. Foreign minister Mr Khurshid M Kasuri said Pakistan's stand is that there should be no more centres of privilege and there should be no increase in permanent members of the UNSC. — PTI

merce and industry minister Mr Kamal Nath.

Mr Koizumi, who had detailed discussions on wide-ranging issues with Mr Kamal Nath, said

India and Japan, as two important Asian nations, could do a lot for world trade and development.

Another report on page 11

15 APR 2005

THE STATESMAN

# Wen to Japan: Face history

**New Delhi, April 12** (Reuters): China's Premier Wen Jiabao today to "face up to history" by admitting the suffering it caused in World War II, and seriously reconsider its bid for a UN Security Council seat after protests in China and elsewhere.

Japanese trade minister Shoichi Nakagawa, referring to China as a "scary country", urged Beijing today to respond properly. Nakagawa said he was concerned about the impact of rising anti-Japanese sentiment on Japanese companies in China.

"Yes, I'm worried ... they're a country that's trying to become a market economy and we need them to take a proper response," he said. "It's a scary country."

Thousands of Chinese joined violent protests at the weekend at what many in Asia see as Japan's failure to own up to atrocities during and before World War II.

Premier Wen Jiabao said the protests should give Tokyo

serious pause for thought about its bid for a Security Council seat. "The strong responses from the Asian people should make the Japanese government have deep and profound reflections," Wen said in New Delhi.

"Only a country that respects history takes responsibility for past history and wins over the trust of people in Asia and the world at large can take greater responsibility in the international community," he said. Anti-Japan sentiment has been running high in China since Japan approved a textbook critics say glosses over the brutalities of Japan's occupation of China from 1931 to 1945.

Wen said Japan should admit the "tremendous suffering and hardship" it had inflicted on the people of China, Asia and the rest of the world.

"The core issue in China-Japan relations is that Japan needs to face up to history squarely," Wen said, but added that the neighbours should

continue to work "to further friendly ties".

Over the weekend, protesters burned the Japanese flag, bashed Japanese-made cars, targeted Japanese businesses and broke windows at the Japanese embassy in Beijing. Japanese TV showed police standing by while protesters threw stones at the embassy.

China overtook the US in 2004 to become Japan's biggest trading partner with about \$178 billion in trade.

## Uighur crackdown

Two US-based human rights groups have accused China of using the law heavily-handedly to clamp down on Muslim Uighurs in its restive western region of Xinjiang in the name of anti-separatism and counter-terrorism.

Beijing's "wholesale assault" on the Uighurs' faith ranged from vetting clerics and closing mosques to detaining thousands every year and executions, Human Rights Watch said.



A poster showing World War II Japanese soldiers killing Chinese in Nanjing is displayed in a Hong Kong shopping mall. (Reuters)

# Japan okays defence shield

Yomiuri Shimbun/ANN & AP

TOKYO, Feb. 15. — Japan's defence chief could order the military to shoot down incoming missiles under legislation endorsed by the Cabinet today, less than a week after North Korea declared for the first time that it has built nuclear weapons.

The Bill is part of sweeping changes to Japan's defence policy launched by Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi long before the North Korean announcement. Critics say the reforms are dismantling the country's post-World War II policy of pacifism.

## 'No missiles for N Korean nukes'

SEOUL, Feb. 15. — South Korea's intelligence agency said that North Korea may have built nuclear bombs but lacked the technical know-how to mount them on missiles. South Korea's National Intelligence Service said in a report to parliament that North Korea's claim could be true. But North Korea's nuclear technology falls short of allowing it to launch a nuclear missile, Yonhap news agency quoted the confidential report as saying. "North Korea might have developed one or two conventional nuclear bombs, but if it did, it may not have the technology to launch them on missile," the report said. The intelligence agency dismissed an earlier claim by Pakistan's disgraced nuclear scientist Dr AQ Khan that he witnessed a North Korean missile carrying a nuclear warhead during his visit to the Stalinist country. — Korea Herald/ANN

Chief Cabinet Secretary Mr only give the order to launch missiles if the nation were under attack. That authority normally

rests with parliament. He added that Japan probably won't have a fully functioning missile-defence system, which is being jointly developed with the USA, for another few years.

## American system fails

For the second time in two months, the Bush administration's new missile defence system has failed to complete a key test, PTI adds from Washington.

The system automatically shut down a few seconds before an interceptor missile was to launch towards a mock enemy warhead yesterday.

# Japan pledges \$500 m<sup>✓</sup>



*The Japanese emperor greets the nation on Saturday. — AFP*

ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO, Jan. 1. — Japan pledged up to \$500 million in grant aid for tsunami disaster relief today, Prime Minister Mr Junichiro Koizumi announced, making the country the largest single donor to victims of the catastrophe.

Mr Koizumi, in a statement, said Japan — which had previously pledged more than 3.1 billion yen (\$30 million) to the relief effort — would extend the aid to affected countries and international organisa-

tions. The promise pushed the world aid pledge to the disaster zone well over \$1 billion.

It also put Asia's biggest and wealthiest economy at the top of the global donor effort to help countries recover from the disaster brought about by last Sunday's tsunami.

Mr Koizumi said he would attend an aid conference next week in Jakarta to "express Japan's determination to extend the maximum possible assistance commensurate with its responsibilities as a fellow Asian partner".