Japan's nuclear power ambitions face turbulent geopolitical headwinds



Japan, the land of the rising sun, is fast emerging as a geopolitical actor in the Indo-Pacific region. Long known for its pacifist constitution and renouncement of war as a State policy, the fast-shifting balance of power and geopolitical upheavals appear to have induced Japan to re-examine its defence and security policy.

Japan has been depending on the United States for its security since the end of the Second World War. The US has not only set up military bases in Japanese islands but also has promised to protect the country from any nuclear attack by adopting a doctrine of Extended Nuclear Deterrence (END).

But it appears that there is growing trust deficit in Japan and questions have been raised in recent years about the reliability of the END.

While Japan has been traditionally against nuclear weapons and has a policy of non-possession, non-development and non-introduction of nuclear weapons on its soil, nuclear proliferation around its borders have deeply affected Japan and encouraged its strategic community to re-examine its stand on nuclear weapons. China refuses to be part of any arms control negotiations and has been rapidly modernising and expanding its nuclear and missile arsenal.

Russia has frequently dangled its nuclear weapons amidst the Ukraine War. North Korea has not only built a nuclear and missile arsenals, it has been periodically testing missiles in close geographical proximity of Japan.

Significantly, Russia, China and North Korea, all three, have deep historical animosity and grievances against Japan. Russia was the first Western Power to have been defeated by the Japanese army in early 20th Century.

Subsequently, it was Russia that joined the Allied Powers during the Second World War and captured four islands of the Kurile Island chain, which still remain a serious territorial dispute between Russia and Japan.

China has deep historical grievances rooted in atrocities committed by Japanese military forces during the first and second Sino-Japanese Wars and World War II. Korea, which was a colony of Japan for about 35 years, continues to have grievances against issues such as "forced labour" and "comfort women".

While South Korea and Japan have been taking steps to resolve old issues, North Korea's hostility against Japan is not hidden. It may be underlined that vast majority of people in South Korea now support the idea of developing an independent nuclear deterrence.

More importantly, all these three countries are geopolitical partners today. North Korea does not exist peacefully with Japan. Japan fiercely opposes Russia's War against Ukraine. And China aggressively challenges Japanese sovereignty over Senkaku Islands in East China Sea. The 2026 Defence White Paper of Japan clearly puts these three countries as the country's core national security threats.

These developments coupled with US President Donald Trump's pressure on Japan to spend more on defence and acquire the capability to defend itself, have deep impact on the strategic community in Japan.

It is widely believed that Trump would not protect Japan from any nuclear attack from North Korea, for instance, at the cost of potential North Korean attack on US territory.

When President Trump referred to the "Pearl Harbour" incident during a press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takeichi, it was certainly not a joke.

Japan has already been taking incremental steps to bolster its defence capabilities.

It has crossed the constitutional limit of defence expenditure which was one percent of the GDP. It has decided to participate in "collective defence" activities, as and when required.

Tokyo is now developing a second-strike capability which is more than self-defence. Under President Trump's pressure, Tokyo now is considering an expenditure of 3.5 per cent of GDP on defence. Tokyo has plans to develop next generation naval assets, unmanned surveillance systems, cyber and space defence capabilities and many more. It has also embarked upon defence modernisation and even collaborating with the UK, and Italy to develop sixth generation stealth fighter jet.

Most consequential development is, however, the statement by Japanese Defence Minister Shinjiro Koizumi that it is crucial for Japan to debate the issue of nuclear weapons and nuclear-powered submarines "without taboos". He has expressed the desire to discuss the need for revising the "three non-nuclear principles" and acquiring nuclear-powered submarines.

This call for a domestic debate on the country's nuclear policy will certainly have wider ramifications in the Indo-Pacific. It is coming in the backdrop of majority of Japanese people now endorsing use of nuclear reactors for electricity generation, which had faced popular backlash after the Fukushima disaster of 2011. The energy crisis created by the wars in Ukraine and Iran and the blockade of Strait of Hormuz and partial blockade of Red Sea has unsettled many energy-importing countries, including Japan. While the repercussion of nuclear energy generation by Japan would have little adversarial impact internationally, revisiting the nuclear principles in Japan is bound to generate strategic stir in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

Japan's constitutional constraints, complex domestic politics and anti-nuclear sentiments of the common people in Japan will continue to be road blocks for emergence of Japan as a nuclear weapon power.

However, the geopolitical headwinds and the repercussions of wars in Europe and West Asia along with the perceived threats posed by three nuclear-neighbours of Japan may open the door for a metamorphosis of Japan's post-Second World War strategic positions, policies and thoughts. For long, "Japanophobia" in East and Southeast Asia discouraged Japan from playing an active role in the security and defence sectors in the Indo-Pacific. Japan, through its economic engagements, investments and developmental assistance has perhaps been able to remove the regional fears of a militarily strong Japan. In the meantime, "Sinophobia" has taken root in certain parts of the Indo-Pacific. An economically strong Japan intends to be a militarily powerful country and rise of a militarily powerful China has raised questions about consequences of its economic embrace with the Indo-Pacific countries. The region seems to be in for unforeseen strategic shifts.

Sanatani vs Hindutva

The link between Sanatani and Hindutva remains a significant and debated aspect of contemporary Indian politics. Although the public and the political discourses often conflate them, these terms come from distinct historical and intellectual backgrounds. Sanatana Dharma refers to an 'eternal' order and represents a broad, internally diverse, civilisational tradition while Hindutva is a twentieth-century political movement centred on ethno-nationalism. The main issue is how Hindutva, as a modern political force, has aimed to co-opt and simplify the wide-reaching, often orthodox, tradition of Sanatana Dharma into a uniform, majoritarian identity. This text contends that this merging is not a natural progression but a strategic political move that simplifies a complex social and philosophical legacy into a tool for electoral gain and cultural influence, often conflicting with the core principles it purports to uphold. The term, Sanatani, describes someone who follows Sanatana Dharma, which means 'the eternal dharma' or 'eternal order'. It is often used as a native, self-chosen label for Hinduism in contrast to the external term, 'Hinduism'. Throughout history, the term's meaning has varied considerably. For example, B.R. Ambedkar associated Sanatana Dharma specifically with the Vedic and the Brahminical traditions, emphasising the Vedas' description of being eternal, and linked it to conservative, high-caste Hindus who opposed social reforms. This orthodox interpretation is important: Sanatanis often use the term to affirm their commitment to a timeless, unchangeable tradition, frequently opposing reform movements. As one analysis states, for Sanatanis, their customs and practices are seen as timeless, perfect and in no need of reformation. During the colonial era, this often meant resisting social reforms introduced by figures like Raja Rammohan Roy. Hindutva emerges as a contemporary political ideology. Conceptualised in 1923 by Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in his book, Hindutva: Who is a Hindu?, Hindutva (as political Hinduism) is not regarded as a religion but as "a history" — a collective civilisational and political identity grounded in three core elements: a shared nation (rashtra), a common race (jati), and a unified civilisation (sanskriti). Importantly, Savarkar, an atheist, emphasised that religion is merely one facet of Hindu identity and not the most significant. His primary criteria were a shared pitrubhoomi (fatherland) and punyabhoomi (holy land) within India's geographical scope. This definition inherently excluded others, viewing Muslims and Christians as "foreigners" and "internal enemies" because their sacred lands lie outside India.

Savarkar carefully distinguished Hindutva from both Hinduism and Sanatana Dharma. He stated, "Hindutva is not identical with what is vaguely indicated by the term Hinduism" and clarified that "Hindutva is not identical with Hindu Dharma, nor is Hindu Dharma identical with Hinduism". He also opposed the improper use of "Hinduism" to refer solely to Sanatana Dharma. This distinction was more than just semantics: Savarkar aimed to develop a broad political identity that united various groups — Aryas, Sanatanists, Sikhs, and others — by emphasising racial and territorial nationalism over religious differences.

Savarkar's relationship with Sanatani orthodoxy was driven by pragmatism. In a 1941 meeting with a Sanatana Dharma group, he acknowledged that the Hindu Mahasabha and Sanatana organisations shared 95% of their points in common and agreed not to pursue legislation on temple entry for untouchables, thus conceding to orthodoxy on caste segregation. This highlights a key dynamic: although Hindutva aimed to go beyond Sanatani particularism ideologically, it was willing to compromise with orthodox groups to form a broader political alliance. Still, Savarkar condemned caste-based discrimination, viewing it as a social barrier hindering Hindu society. Their relationship was therefore more an uneasy alliance than a shared identity. In modern Indian politics, the distinction Savarkar once made has largely disappeared. The Bharatiya Janata Party and its ideological parent, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, now increasingly merge Hindutva with Sanatana Dharma. The RSS supremo thus declares that Sanatana Dharma will only be revived when a Hindu rashtra is established, and senior BJP officials have publicly linked Sanatana Dharma to a national ethic based on Hindu nationalism. This marks a notable shift from Savarkar's original stance, which did not equate Sanatana Dharma with the entire Hindu community.

This appropriation has a distinct political purpose. It equates Hindutva — a political ideology — with Sanatana Dharma — a longstanding civilisational and religious tradition — giving the ideology an aura of ancient legitimacy and sacredness. As one expert notes, the issue is not about Sanatana Dharma itself but how politics has distorted it. The rich philosophical legacy of Sanatana Dharma, known for debate and pluralism, is diminished to a mere electoral identity, with its symbols exaggerated while its core values are undermined. Referencing Sanatana Dharma becomes a strategy to justify majoritarian politics, evident in the shift from slogans like Hindu, Muslim, Sikh, Isai to more exclusionary narratives. The blending of Sanatani and Hindutva masks a key conflict: the anti-caste critique central to much of the Sanatana tradition's history. Ambedkar argued that Sanatana Dharma cemented a birth-based caste system and untouchability, equating the term with Brahminical dominance. Although Hindutva claims to oppose caste discrimination rhetorically, it often aligns with Sanatani orthodoxy on social reform, as shown by Savarkar's 1941 compromise. Consequently, Hindutva's political use of Sanatana Dharma risks sustaining the social hierarchies that many Sanatani reformers and anti-caste movements aim to dismantle. The Hindutva view of Hindu identity is inherently exclusionary compared to the broader Sanatana tradition. Hindutva insists on a common punyabhoomi (holy land) within India, explicitly excluding Muslims and Christians.

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Trump and Xi may be shaping a new bipolar world, but multipolarity isn't dead yet

For some years now, the phrase "multipolar world" has acquired the status of a reassuring mantra. The assumption behind it is that American hegemony is receding, China is rising, Russia remains consequential, India is emerging, Europe possesses considerable economic weight, and several regional powers are acquiring the capacity to resist being dictated to. The world — we were told — was becoming more dispersed, more balanced and therefore, presumably, more democratic.

But history has a habit of laughing at reassuring assumptions. The extraordinary chemistry — or, more accurately, the extraordinary calculation — between Donald Trump and Xi Jinping now raises a different possibility. Are we, while talking about multipolarity, actually drifting towards a bipolar world?

The recent Trump-Xi summit in Washington was ceremonially extravagant and saw agreements on trade, investment, agricultural purchases and non-sensitive goods; mechanisms were created to manage the economic relationship; and the two sides agreed to continue dialogue on artificial intelligence and other difficult questions. Yet Taiwan, technology, rare earths and the wider strategic rivalry remained unresolved.

In spite of the somewhat modest agenda, what this summitry indicated is that the US and China may have discovered that they have a common interest in preventing their rivalry from becoming an uncontrollable conflict. This is not friendship; it is not trust. It is not even an alliance. It is something more cold-blooded: mutual indispensability. America needs China; China needs America.

In effect, what we are seeing playing out is not the architecture of divorce; it is the architecture of managed coexistence. The United States cannot easily wish away China because China is too large an economy, too deeply embedded in global manufacturing and supply chains, too consequential in international trade and too formidable a military power. China, equally, cannot wish away America. The US remains indispensable to the international financial system, possesses enormous military reach and remains at the cutting edge of several critical technologies.

There is a logic behind this bipolarity. Russia, though still a nuclear power and a major military actor, has been debilitatingly distracted by the Ukraine war. Its economic and demographic limitations have become more apparent. Europe possesses extraordinary wealth, but its ability to translate economic strength into autonomous geopolitical power remains constrained. NATO remains militarily formidable, but Trump's repeated impatience with European allies has exposed the political fragility of the transatlantic relationship. India is undoubtedly rising, and its diplomatic weight is increasing. But the brutal arithmetic of power still matters. GDP, military expenditure, technological capacity, industrial production and global financial reach determine how much influence a country can exercise. Being the world's largest democracy is a formidable political attribute; it is not, by itself, a substitute for comprehensive national power.

This is where the G2 thesis becomes plausible. America and China could, in theory, cooperate where their interests converge while informally recognising each other's spheres of influence elsewhere. Washington could retain predominant influence in the Western hemisphere and across much of the Atlantic and Pacific alliance system; Beijing could consolidate its primacy in East Asia and enlarge its influence across parts of Asia, Africa and the Global South.

The only impediment to this proposition is that the world is not a cake waiting to be sliced. India will not comply to being in the Chinese sphere of influence. Japan will not simply accept Chinese primacy in East Asia. Australia will not abandon its American security relationship. Europe may disagree with Washington but is hardly waiting to become subordinate to Beijing. Southeast Asian countries, many of which trade extensively with China while depending upon American security arrangements, have no desire to choose permanently between the two.

Notwithstanding this, the world must accept—at least in theory—that it could become a two-nation condominium. If two powers begin believing that they have the right to decide matters affecting everyone else, international institutions could become even more decorative. A second consequence is the danger of what was considered extinct:



spheres of influence. And the third, of course, is the spectre of collusion. America and China could cooperate, not because they agree on principles, but because cooperation serves their respective interests. What benefits Washington and Beijing may not necessarily benefit Delhi, Tokyo, Brussels, Jakarta or Nairobi; but what, if anything, can they do about it?

For India, the answer cannot be to choose Washington against Beijing, nor Beijing against Washington. It must be to enlarge India's own room for manoeuvre. Strategic autonomy cannot mean strategic isolation.

India needs American technology and capital, European markets, Russian energy and defence relationships, and a stable, carefully managed relationship with China.

It must simultaneously expand domestic manufacturing, military capability, technological competence and economic scale.

TRUHOME FINANCE LIMITED (Formerly Shriram Housing Finance Ltd.)
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APPENDIX-IV-A [SEE PROVISION TO RULE 8(6)] SALE NOTICE FOR SALE OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTIES

E-Auction Sale Notice for Sale of Immovable Assets under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 read with provision to Rule 8(6)] of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002.

NNotice is hereby given to the public in general and in particular to the Borrower/s and Guarantor/s that the below described immovable properties mortgaged/ charged to Truhome Finance Limited (formerly Shriram Housing Finance Limited), the Physical Possession of which have been taken by the Authorized Officer of Truhome Finance Limited, will be sold on "As is where is", "As is what is" and "Whatever there is" basis for recovery of the balance due to Truhome Finance Limited from the Borrowers And Guarantors, as mentioned in the table.
Details of Borrowers and Guarantors, amount due, Short Description of the immovable property, reserve price and earnest money deposit and date of Inspection are also given as:

Name of Borrowers/ Co-Borrowers/ Guarantors/Mortgagers	Amount of Recovery and date of Demand Notice	Reserve Price (Rs.) & Bid Increment	Date & Time of Auction	Contact Person Details – (AO and Disposal team)
(1). Darji Suchikaben Jigar kumar **Present & Property Address :- Flat No.B/701, Siddheshwari Gold , Near Bank Of Baroda, Near Pethapur Police Station, Pethapur, Gandhinagar-382610** **Also :- 1.2) Darji Suchikaben Jigar Kumar** **Permanent Address :- 6-64, Sardar patel colony, Sector-14, Gandhinagar-382016** **(2). Darji Jigar Vinodabhai** **Present & Property Address :-Flat No.B/701, Siddheshwari Gold , Near Bank Of Baroda, Near Pethapur Police Station, Pethapur, Gandhinagar-382610** **Also :- 2.2). Darji Jigar Vinodabhai** **Permanent Address :- 6-64, Sardar patel colony, Sector -14, Gandhinagar-382016_** **Lan. SHLHKADI0000044** **Date of Possession & Type** **23.08.2026 and Physical Possession** **Encumbranches known** Not Known	Rs.30,52,525/ (Rupees Thirty Lakh Fifty Two Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Five Only) as on 07-02-2026 under reference of Loan Account No. SHLHKADI0000044 13(2) Notice Date. 09.02.2026	Rs.26,50,000/- (Rupees Twenty Six Lakh Fifty Thousand Only) **Bid Increment:** Rs. 10,000/- and in such multiples. **Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)(Rs.)** Rs.2,65,000/- (Rupees Two Lakh Sixty Five Thousand Only) **Last date for submission of EMD : 24th November 2026, Time 10.00 a.m. to 05.00 p.m.**	**25-Nov-2026 & Auction Time: 11:00 AM to 11:30 AM**	**Debjyoti Roy- 09747 02021** **Property inspection Date. 24.10.2026**

Description of Property

All the right, title, and interest in the property bearing Flat No. 701, Block-B, on the 7th Floor, admeasuring approximately 53.70 sq. mtrs. (carpet area) and construction area, together with an undivided share of 26.81 sq. mtrs., in the scheme known as "Siddheshwari Gold", situated at Mouje-Pethapur, Taluka- Gandhinagar, District Gandhinagar, on the land bearing Survey No. 443 of T.P. No. 16 (Pethapur), F.P. No. 18/7 Paiki 18/7/1, within the registration Sub District of Gandhinagar. Gujarat
Boundaries of the Property (As per Sale Deed) : North: 12 Mtr Road South: Flat No. B/702 , East: 18 Mtr Road West: Staircase & Flat No. A/704
Boundaries of the Property (As per Technical Report) : North: Margin after boundary wall South: Passage, then Flat No. 702 East: Margin after boundary West: Staircase, then Flat No. 704

1) **For detailed terms and conditions of the sale, please refer the website of Truhome Finance Limited (Formerly Shriram Housing Finance Limited) website.**
2) **The intending bidders have to submit their EMD amount to be deposited by way of RTGS/NEFT to the account details mentioned herein below: BANK NAME: AXIS BANK LIMITED BRANCH: BANDRA KURLA COMPLEX, MUMBAI BANK ACCOUNT NO. Current Account No. 911020045677633 IFSC CODE: UTIB0000230.**
3) **The mortgagors/borrowers are given a last chance to pay the total dues with further interest before auction, failing which secured assets will be sold as per above schedule.**
4) **The mortgagors/borrowers are requested to collect your all remaining movable items within period of 7 days without damages of the property. If you fail to take movable assets, then it would be deemed that you have no claim and no interest in taking back such items. In case you still prefer to ignore this notice, we shall be constrained to treat them as unclaimed and waste materials and shall not be liable for any loss or damage whatsoever to such articles and also may sell all movable Items and adjust the amount against outstanding dues of your loan account. It will be also deemed that you have no claim and interest in taking back such items and also have no objection, if such items are disposed-off or sold by us as items are having negligible substantial value. Also note that by not taking the items within specified time, you will also relinquish any right or claim over such items in future.**
5) **NB: Please note that the secured creditor is going to issue the sale notice to all the Borrowers/ Guarantors/ Mortgagors by speed/ registered post. In case the same is not received by any of the parties, then this publication of sale notice may be treated as a substituted mode of service.**

Place : Gandhinagar(Pethapur)
Date: 19-10-2026
Sd/- Authorised Officer- Truhome Finance Limited
(Formerly Shriram Housing Finance Limited)