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## ***From Economic Powerhouse to Uncertainty: Japan's Decline Amid Geopolitical Miscalculations***

Japan's once-thriving economy is facing a critical juncture, experiencing declining growth, regional tensions, and the effects of geopolitical decisions that have reshaped its global position.



In February 2024, the Japanese economy witnessed unprecedented recession, and it slipped to number 4 in the global ranking. During the last quarter of 2023, the Japanese economy shrank by 0.4 percent. Previously, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2023, it shrank by 2.9 percent. However, it is very important to understand that why Germany surpassed Japan by taking the 3<sup>rd</sup> position. There are several factors behind Japan's failing economy and its overall orientation. Till 2010, Japan was ranked at number 2, when China took it over, and since then, China is making great progress in its economic growth.

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Japan's dwindling economy has a direct relation to its overall strategy to secure its national objectives. Tokyo's growing bitterness in its bilateral relations with its regional neighbours is a major factor contributing towards a stagnant or perhaps uncertain economy. Apparently,

Japan's statecraft has sworn an oath to enter into a hostile relationship with all of its regional neighbours to appease the American statecraft.

It is very strange that Japan is a member of many influential international organizations including G-20, G-7, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Also, as per the latest available statistics, Japan is currently spending around 50 billion USD on defence. However, still its economy is not in a good shape.

### **The Japanese Industries and Automakers Pulled out of Russia**

For instance, since the beginning of Russia's Special Military Operation in Ukraine in February 2022, the Japanese automakers including Toyota, Mitsubishi, Honda, Mazda, Subaru, and Nissan, stopped exporting their automobiles to Russia and sold their manufacturing plants in the Russian markets. Similarly, Japan's Suzuki stopped exporting cars and auto parts to Russia. Also, to appease the West, the Japanese industrial manufacturing companies of all sorts pulled out of Russia including Bridgestone, Toshiba, Sony, Olympus, Panasonic, Nintendo, Denso, Canon, Mitsubishi Electric, Fujitsu, and Komatsu. These companies were operating many manufacturing facilities in Russia and were earning billions of USD from the Russian markets. The Japanese not only pulled all of their businesses out of Russia, but they launched an organised attack on Russia at the politico-diplomatic fronts.

However, the truth is that long before the initiation of Russia's Special Military Operation in Ukraine, the Japanese have been preparing to wage war against Russia and its people. Since the end of the Second World War, Japan is behaving more than an American proxy and has remained ever busy in hurting the Russian interests in the region and beyond.

### **The Japanese Dilemma**

Japan has a rapidly declining and ageing population. With such a population, it must seek friendly relations, especially in its near abroad. However, quite the contrary, Japan has extremely tense relations with its regional neighbours including Russia, China, and North Korea. And the Japanese leadership has further opted to become a vibrant member of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) to further its military activities, especially in the Pacific Ocean with the help of the United States and Australia.

Japan's pulling out all its businesses from Russia is resulting in the Honda-Nissan-Mitsubishi merger. Russia had no beef against these Japanese automakers; however, they pulled out of Russia and now are facing many problems, including financial.

The world is a witness to Japan's atrocities against the innocent Korean and Chinese people during and before the Second World War. The "Rape of Nanking" is still used as a metaphor

in describing the butchery and barbarianism of the Japanese soldiers against the Chinese people. Hence, the Japanese so-called lectures on human rights and the sanctity of the sovereignty of states neither match its history nor its conduct.

### **Conclusions**

Japan and its people are on a path of self-destruction that is motivated by a peculiar sense of hatred towards the Russia and its people. In hindsight, Japan's self-inflicted wound of hatred is resulting in nothing, but a greater sense of patriotism and nationalism among the Russian people that is time and again reflected in the growing Russian economy despite the Western sanctions. For instance, in January 2024, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted strong Russian economic growth in the coming year, especially in relation to most of the European nations. The IMF clearly indicated that "Russia to grow 3.2% this year, significantly more than the UK, France and Germany."

In another report, the World Bank has updated its latest international rankings and "has promoted the Russian economy to the top income category." The report noted that "Despite sanctions by Western countries against Russia...the country has become a high-income economy from an upper-middle income economy." These findings by the Western financial and monetary institutions clearly indicate that the hatred towards Russia and the Russian people will only make them stronger and more resilient against the Western politico-diplomatic pressure. The world must appreciate the resilience of the Russian economy and the spirit of the Russian people that are steadfast against the Japanese onslaught.

Simon Westwood, January 12, 2025

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