

## A death unforecasted: On assassination of Shinzo Abe

The article is related to  
General Studies-Paper-II  
(International Relations)

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### **The assassination of Shinzo Abe could have far-reaching consequences for the Japanese psyche.**

Shinzo Abe was a popular, even if divisive, politician who was no stranger to controversies. But he was also one of the most consequentialist leaders of post-war Japan. Since his rise to power in 2006 until his tragic assassination last week, he remained a tall presence in Japan's politics and his views reshaped the country's global profile.

When he became Prime Minister for the second time in 2012, Japan's economy was in recession. A year earlier, an earthquake and tsunami had wreaked havoc, killing up to 20,000 people. Its U.S.-reliant foreign and pacifist defence policies faced a new challenge with the rapid rise of China.

Abe believed that Japan should first rebuild its economy if it wanted to address other challenges. His economic programme with "three arrows" — monetary easing, higher fiscal spending and liberalisation — or "Abenomics", helped Japan come out of recession. His government oversaw the post-quake reconstruction, and in foreign policy he adopted a more hawkish line that was unapologetic of Japan's violent imperial past.

He wanted to rewrite the country's U.S.-drafted post-war pacifist Constitution to allow the military to take a bigger role in national security. In 2013, as Prime Minister, he visited the Yasukuni Shrine, a controversial memorial for Japan's war dead, including its war criminals. These actions triggered criticisms in the region, but at home, Abe used them to reshape the national security debate.

Abe may not have succeeded in restoring Japan's economic superpower status while his attempts to rewrite the Constitution met with strong opposition from sections of the political class and society for whom memories of its past militarism are still afresh. But Abe left a lasting imprint on its security thinking, spending more on defence (breaking the long-held cap of 1%).

Having realised the limits of Japan's power in meeting regional challenges, he advocated a deeper relationship with the U.S. and pushed for a regional response to China's rise. He was one of the strongest advocates of the Quad, and by the time he left power in 2020, the Quad had been revitalised.

In a country where talks about a stronger defence policy were considered taboo, Abe mainstreamed discussions for a stronger defence doctrine and even called for a nuclear sharing agreement with the U.S. He remained an influential figure in national politics.

His assassination could have consequences for the Japanese psyche. Gun violence and political assassinations may have been rare in contemporary Japan, but it was not so during the pre-war period. No Japanese politician would like that chaos to be back.

The law enforcement authorities should not only bring the facts about the assassination to the public but also make sure that such tragic events do not take place.

### Expected Question (Prelims Exams)

**Q. Consider the following statements -**

1. A joint military exercise named Shinyu Maitri and Dharma Guardian is organized by India and Japan.
2. The India- Japan Association was established in the year 1903.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- (a) 2 only                      (b) 1 only  
(c) Both 1 and 2              (d) Neither 1 nor 2

**Ans. (c)**

### Expected Question (Mains Exams)

**Q. Considering the growing influence of China in the Indo-Pacific region, analyze the importance of Japan to India.**

**(250 Words)**

**Note: - The question of the main examination given for practice is designed keeping in mind the upcoming UPSC main examination. Therefore, to get an answer to this question, you can take the help of this source as well as other sources related to this topic.**