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ATOMIC KILLING FIELDS AND AFTERWARDS

MAY 31, 2002. A senior Japanese government official openly mentioned that Japan's 'National Policy' on three non-nuclear principles may be reviewed. He also added that this review must consider the international political situation and also the opinion of ordinary Japanese people. Fukuda Yasuo, Cabinet Secretary, the chief spokesman of the government went more steps further. He declared, legally Japan can possess small nuclear bombs. The officials also added that it is not unconstitutional for Japan to possess intercontinental ballistic missiles.

What are the three non-nuclear principles ? Japan is not to possess, manufacture or allow nuclear weapons to be brought into Japan.

On 6th August 2002, during Hiroshima day observation, Prime minister of Japan, Koizumi Junichiro, announced his desire of banning all nuclear weapons from the globe. However, few months back, the same statesman was not dead against nuclear weaponisation. He made a remark before the press ; 'It's a matter to be decided by the people'.

The atomic bomb survivors (Hibakusha) took it as a serious exception. On 6th and 9th August 1945, the atomic bombs took the lives of hundreds of thousands of people instantly. Lot of people are suffering from atomic diseases till today. We can cite here a sharp remark made by a representative of the organisation, Nihon Hidankyo (Japan Confederation of A and H Bombs Sufferers Organisations).

'I fell victim to the atomic bombing of Nagasaki when I was 14 years old. Sufferings from the after effects still continue. Such statements came from the rightist and

militarist nature of the Japanese government which openly began to speak out'.

We are living today in a Unipolar World under globalisation. In spite of having a resolution for ban of all nuclear weapons from UNO, all the countries are not moving forward accordingly. We have also a serious concern about our own Asian region. A number of defence experts have clearly demonstrated that not only deployment but also possession of nuclear arsenals may lead to severe consequences (EPW, June 22, 2002). Managing nuclear weapons require unprecedented precautions. Still it does not become full proof. The technology is so complex for nuclear weapons to place them as missiles, it 'involves the unpredictability of circumstances and human behavior interacting with complex sensors, communications systems, command centres and weapons. The smallest detail can assume central importance and range widely in substance, from the legitimacy of presidential succession to computer algorithms, from the psychology of stress to the physics of electromagnetic pulse. Even the most advanced experts and the most experienced practitioners are narrowly and incompletely informed. No one understands the whole'. (Introduction in a book 'Managing nuclear operations' edited by A. B. Carter & J. D. Steinbruner, The Brookings Institution, Washington, 1987).

Hiroshima and Nagasaki are two American made atomic killing fields where a time-unbound deaths are going on. This tragedy is not simply a memoir. Hiroshima & Nagasaki, till today, are afraid of giving birth to a child.

What lesson, then, we should have from the August episode ?

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