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Given history lessons, Japan's rearmament drive should be kept at bay

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Humanity can learn from mistakes and lessons provided by history.

Japan's rearmament pursuit incarnated in a array of controversial moves its government has taken recently demands high vigilance of the international community and should be timely contained, considering the horrible occurrences in the last century.

On Sept. 1, 1923, a deadly mega-quake jolted Japan's main island of Honshu, killing hundreds of thousands of people, including three royal family members, and leaving about 1.5 million homeless in Tokyo and Yokohama.

The devastating quake had further exacerbated anxieties for security and survival of the island nation, which has been fettered by its narrow land territory and the lack of natural resources.

These anxieties and mentality have been behind Japan's aspiration for military expansion of its Lebensraum or living space overseas.

Also in the 1920s, a hurricane of economic crisis originating from the United States crushed Japan's economy, leaving around 3 million people jobless. That as well prompted Japan to speed up its military expansion overseas to quell domestic turbulence.

A then weak and perplexed China, which was only years away from the crumble of the 2000-year-long feudal imperialist system and overwhelmed by warlords' infighting, topped Tokyo's hunting list.

In later years, a militarized fascist Japan launched one of the most sanguinary aggression in the human history into China and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region and killed tens of thousands of people before it was defeated in 1945.

After nearly a century passed since the 1923 quake, Japan was hard hit again in March 2011 by a 9.0-magnitude earthquake, which was followed by huge tsunami waves that set off a nuclear crisis.

This natural disaster came at a time when Japan was led by a ever-right tilting government and mired in a stagnated economy in the aftermath of the worst global financial meltdown since the Great Depression.

These striking similarities seen in the 1920s and in the recent years have already carried enough weight for the world community to stay highly vigilant again.

In fact, the real situation on the ground is even worrying. The Japanese government led by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe seems to have taken history not as a lesson, but more of a humiliation of a defeated samurai.

Therefore, it has apparently decided to rearm itself despite constraints prescribed in its constitution and opposition voiced by nations having the best knowledge on what kind of brutality and slaughter Japan was able to deliver if its paranoia for growing military muscle went unchecked.

Seeking to conceal its territorial ambitions, Abe and many of his cabinet ministers are tirelessly whipping up Chinaphobia and China-threat in a coherent manner so as to rationalize their motive for military build-up.

While at the same time, the United States, Japan's adversary-turned-ally, is taking advantage of the escalating tensions to maintain orders in the Asia-Pacific according to Washington's wishes.

Yet it seems that the U.S. government has forgotten the Japanese politicians never play the game by the rules, and once their vicious desires are unleashed, American lives could also be in jeopardy.

Therefore, nations concerned should not appease a warmongering Japan again.

For the world not to be pushed into another bloody conflict, all peace-loving nations, especially those in the region, need to stand united, take enough precautions against Japan's malicious agenda, and adopt effective measures to contain Tokyo's dangerous pursuit of rearmament.

These countermeasures could include strong international consensus at the UN and other

multilateral forums that demand the Abe administration stop further fan the flames in Northeast Asia, as well as practical economic sanctions that could cost Japan dearly so that it would never again cross over the line.

Because of Japan's self-assertive moves, the Asia-Pacific region is once again standing on the edge of a situation very much similar to that seen 90 years ago.

For the sake of peace and the millions of lives that were lost during the Second World War, it is dead certain that this time the horrors of history should not be repeated, and chances for another dispiteous war should be strangled once and for all.