SPECIAL FEATURE

5 China’s Carbon Neutrality Policy: Objectives, Impacts and Paths
by DONG Liang, MIAO Gaoyi and WEN Weigang

China will face various challenges and multiple opportunities in achieving carbon neutrality due to the impact of COVID-19 and the nature of its economic activities. Its specific path towards achieving carbon peak and carbon neutrality should be coordinated with the requirements of world economic situation and its long-term economic reforms. It will also increase policy space to adjust its industrial structure and economic model towards green recovery.

19 Japan’s Policy on Net Carbon Neutrality by 2050
by Hiroshi OHTA

Japan’s declaration of the 2050 net carbon neutrality is not an abrupt policy decision but an established policy line to respond to international and domestic pressures. Japan’s prospects of achieving it are not necessarily bright. However, fierce competition for energy transition and the next generation of technologies have generated a sense of crisis in certain industries.

33 South Korea’s 2050 Carbon Neutrality Policy
by OH Hyungna, HONG Inkee and OH Ilyoung

The future of Korea’s 2050 carbon neutrality is uncertain. Korea’s green New Deal—a comprehensive plan to pave the way towards 2050 net-zero emissions—will and have to evolve continuously. If the Korean government adopts a proper carbon pricing system, the private sector will be motivated to actively participate in low-carbon transition.

ESSAYS

47 EU–China Relations at a Crossroads: Decoupling or a European “Sinatra Doctrine”?
by Frank UMBACH

The EU–China relations have been based on a mutually expanding economic relationship and deeper trade. The EU is increasingly unwilling to support an “unequal partnership” whereby China’s long-term objective to integrate into the Western global governance system comes at the expense of the EU’s short-term interests. The EU may be forced to adopt some degree of decoupling.
China, Japan and India: Asia’s Tangled Triangle in a Disrupted World
by Purnendra Jain

Japan–China and India–China relations are characterised by tensions, distrust and strategic competition. Nevertheless, both Japan and India have deep economic ties and interdependencies with China. India–Japan economic ties, on the other hand, remain weak whereas their defence, security and politico/strategic ties are “super strong”.

China–Japan Economic Cooperation with ASEAN: Keohane’s International Regime Theory
by Ahmad Ramezani and Yahya Kamali

ASEAN, as a whole, has avoided unilateral and excessive dependence by diversifying its trading partners. However, some of these countries tend to have greater inclination towards China, while others are more inclined towards Japan. This can be explained by China’s and Japan’s different priorities in their trade and investment in different ASEAN countries.

Japan’s Peacebuilding under the Abe Administration: Change and Continuity, 2012–2020
by Yuji Uesugi, Kazushige Kobayashi and Tomoaki Honda

Abe Shinzo is internationally known for launching a new policy of “active pacifism” and many of his International Peacebuilding Assistance reforms were incrementally built upon the existing frameworks. Whether Japan can emerge as a genuinely “proactive” peacebuilding actor largely depends on the future of the constitutional reform.

South Korea: Emerging Stronger from COVID-19
by Ryu Yongwook

Despite South Korea’s effective management of the COVID-19 outbreak and its economic fallout, the Moon Jae-in administration comes under public scrutiny and criticism. The Korean government needs to tackle the growing socio-economic inequalities, falling birth rate and rising property prices in order to emerge as an affluent, high-tech and advanced society.