

AIR Spotlight - India Japan Ties for a Better Tomorrow

AIR Spotlight is an insightful program featured daily on the All India Radio Newsonair. In this program, many eminent panellists discuss issues of importance which can be quite helpful in [IAS exam](#) preparation. In this article, the topic of discussion is India Japan Ties for a Better Tomorrow.

Participants

- Skand Ranjan Tayal, Former Diplomat
- Simran Sodhi, Journalist

Context:

The Japanese Prime Minister arrived in India and announced a plan to invest 5 trillion yen (\$42 billion) over the next five years.

India-Japan Relations

- The year 2022 marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and India.
- The 70th anniversary is based on the theme "building a future for our centenary".
- **Know more about [India - Japan Relations](#).**

India Japan and Ukraine Crisis

- The international community faces a situation that is undermining the very foundation of the global order.
- Russia's invasion of Ukraine is a clear violation of international law as well as an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force.
- Upholding the core principles of the international order is indispensable from the perspective of diplomacy and security in the Indo-Pacific.
- Japan will unite with the international community and take resolute actions.
- Such actions must not be tolerated in the Indo-Pacific region, and it is critical to further promote efforts toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific".

Significance of Japanese PM Fumio Kishida's India visit

- **The context of the visit:**
 - This is the first incoming visit at the level of Head of Government/Head of State level to India this year (2022). The Summit between the Indian and Japanese PMs is taking place three and a half years after the last Summit in Japan in 2018.

- This year also marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of India-Japan diplomatic relations (28 April 1952).
- **The strategic reasons for the Japanese PM's visit are important**
 - There will be talks on convergence on free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific.
 - Talks on progress in defense and security and in the regional context.
 - India and Japan signed a Reciprocal Provision of Supplies and Services Agreement (RPSS).
 - The inaugural 2+2 ministerial meeting was held in November 2019.
- **Act East Forum:**
 - A decision was taken in the 2017 Summit to establish the India-Japan Act East Forum. The objective is to coordinate developmental projects in North-East India in areas of connectivity, forest management, disaster risk reduction and capacity building.
- **Projects and Infrastructure**
 - Several projects including the up-gradation of highways in Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram are underway.
 - Several infrastructure projects are underway through Japanese assistance including Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail, Dedicated Freight Corridor, metro projects, DMIC, etc
 - Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI) – The Trade and Economy Ministers of India, Japan and Australia launched the (SCRI) on 27 April 2021.
- **The economic component of ties with Japan**
 - Since the Indian PM's visit to Japan in 2014, tremendous progress has been made on the implementation of several important decisions which have been taken by the PMs.
 - Japan is the 5th largest source of [FDI](#); largest supplier of ODA (development partner of India)
- **Digital Partnership:**
 - The two sides had signed a Digital Partnership in October 2018. Collaboration in startups has emerged as a vibrant aspect under this Partnership.
 - India and Japan have also launched a private sector driven fund-of-funds to invest in technology startups in India which has raised USD 100 million so far.
 - Both countries also have cooperation in the field of ICT, in areas such as 5G, under-sea cables, telecom and network security. A workshop on 5G was also held.

India Japan relations and China

- Although the India-Japan relationship has its own driving forces in terms of robust economic ties and shared values, China is the elephant in the room in the strategic parleys between the two countries.
- The current Japanese leadership has been very proactive in attempting to forge a strategic partnership and to deepen the defense and security relationship with India, seeking to hedge China.

- India has, however, been very circumspect in response to Japanese overtures, out of concern for Chinese sensitivity.
- China's strategy has aimed to dissuade India from partnering with Japan to oppose China.
- Thus, its rhetoric on India-Japan strategic partnership has been very conciliatory, while at the same time being critical of Japan.

Way Forward

- **India-Japan economic relations:** Our economic partnership can further strengthen the economy of the Indo-Pacific, as well as the world economy. Both countries have also promoted economic cooperation in other countries to enhance social infrastructure and connectivity.
 - **Cultural exchanges** including literature, movies, music, sports and academics are essential for our relations, enabling a better understanding. The young, ignited minds of our countries will be the foundation of an even stronger friendship in the future.
 - **Despite the coronavirus pandemic**, our ties continue to flourish. Even though the number of in-person interactions may have been impacted, this in no way does this imply that our ties have weakened. We can strengthen our partnership even during the pandemic by utilizing digital technology as a facilitator of new and innovative methods to stay in touch with each other.
-