



India Japan 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting

For Prelims: [Indo-Pacific region](#), [ASEAN](#), [United Nations Charter](#), [Veer Guardian](#), [Dharma Guardian](#), [JIMEX](#), [Unmanned ground vehicles](#), [26/11 Mumbai attack](#), [Buddhism](#)

For Mains: India-Japan Relations, Strategic Partnerships and Regional Security, ASEAN and Regional Diplomacy

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Why in News?

[India and Japan](#) recently held their **third 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting** in New Delhi.

- The discussions, which took place against the backdrop of growing geopolitical tensions and **China's assertiveness in the [Indo-Pacific region](#)**, focused on deepening bilateral cooperation across various sectors.

What are the Key Highlights of the India and Japan 2+2 Meet?

- **Free and Open Indo-Pacific:** Both countries emphasised their commitment to a **free, open, and rules-based Indo-Pacific**.
- The strategic alignment is driven by **China's growing military presence** in the region.
- The ministers supported **[Association of Southeast Asian Nations \(ASEAN\)'s unity and centrality](#)**, endorsing the **ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)**.
- The AOIP emphasises **ASEAN's central role in fostering cooperation, stability, and peace across the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions**.
- It also reflects ASEAN's commitment to promoting a **rules-based regional order** founded on the principles of the **[United Nations Charter](#)**.
- They reaffirmed their commitment to **advancing cooperation within the [Quadrilateral Security Dialogue \(QUAD\)](#)**, following the discussions at the **[Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting](#)** in July 2024.
- Japan and India expressed intentions to collaborate in security assistance to third countries for regional peace and stability.
- **Defence and Security Cooperation:** The ministers recognized defence cooperation as a pillar of their **Special Strategic and Global Partnership**.
- **Japan's National Security Strategy**, issued in 2022, further bolstered the bilateral defence relationship.
- Progress made in multilateral exercises such as **[Veer Guardian \(2023\)](#)**, **[Dharma Guardian \(Military\)](#)**, **[JIMEX \(naval\)](#)**, **[SHINYUU Maitri \(air force\)](#)** and **[Malabar \(along with Australia and the US\)](#)** were emphasised.
- They appreciated advancements in **[unmanned ground vehicles \(UGVs\)](#)** and **robotics cooperation**.
- Both countries agreed to revise and update the **2008 Joint Declaration** to address contemporary

security challenges. This update will reflect current priorities and align with the evolving global security landscape.

- **Terrorism and Extremism:** Both sides condemned terrorism and violent [extremism](#), with particular emphasis on [cross-border terrorism](#).
- They called for bringing perpetrators of the [26/11 Mumbai attacks](#) and other incidents to justice.
- Efforts to eliminate terrorist **safe havens**, cut off financing channels, and halt the movement of terrorists were supported, with specific mention of groups such as [Al Qaeda, ISIS/Daesh, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba \(LeT\), and Jaish-e-Mohammad \(JeM\)](#).
- Technology: Discussions highlighted the transfer of Japan's Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) and related technologies.
- The Unicorn system is a **unified complex radio antenna** that integrates multiple antennas into a single horn-shaped structure. It aims to **minimise radar signatures, making warships less detectable** by enemy forces.
- The system can also **detect missiles and drones**, enhancing situational awareness through its ability to sense radio waves over a wide area.
- Both sides agreed to explore **Japanese naval ship maintenance in India** and discussed future defence technology cooperation.
- **Women, Peace, and Security (WPS):** Japan and India emphasised the role of [women in peacekeeping operations](#) and supported the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda.
- The WPS Agenda is a global framework aimed at addressing the gendered impacts of conflict and **enhancing women's participation in peace processes**. This agenda was formalised with the **adoption of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in 2000**, which highlights the critical roles **women play in preventing and resolving conflicts, peacebuilding, and post-conflict recovery**.

What are 2+2 Meetings?

- **About: 2+2 meetings** are high-level diplomatic dialogues involving the **foreign and defence ministers** of two countries.
- This format facilitates in-depth discussions on **strategic, security, and defence issues, aiming to enhance bilateral relations** and address mutual concerns, which can help in resolving conflicts and building stronger partnerships.
- **India's 2+2 Partners:**
- **United States:** The [US is India's oldest and most prominent 2+2 partner](#). The first 2+2 dialogue between India and the US occurred in 2018.
- This dialogue replaced the previous **Strategic and Commercial Dialogue** and was intended to deepen strategic cooperation and address shared concerns.
- **Russia:** The inaugural 2+2 meeting with Russia took place in 2021. Both countries share similar views on a **multipolar world order** and use this platform to discuss a broad range of regional and international issues.
- In addition to the US and Russia, India has engaged in 2+2 meetings with **Australia, Japan, Brazil** and the [United Kingdom](#) to bolster defence and security cooperation, enhance strategic depth, and align on a multipolar world order.

What is the Significance of ASEAN for India and Japan?

- [ASEAN](#) is crucial for both India and Japan due to its strategic, economic, and geopolitical significance.
- For India, **ASEAN represents a vital component of its [Act East policy](#), enhancing trade, regional connectivity, and diplomatic influence** in the Indo-Pacific.
 - India engages in infrastructure projects and economic agreements to strengthen ties and ensure maritime security in crucial sea lanes.
- For Japan, ASEAN is a **major trade partner and investment destination**, with Japan leveraging its economic presence through development aid and infrastructure projects.
 - As a signatory to [Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership](#), Japan strengthens its economic ties with ASEAN through a larger framework of trade and economic cooperation.
- Both countries collaborate with ASEAN to uphold **regional stability, counterbalance regional threats, and promote a rules-based order** and a stable, open Indo-Pacific region.

How has the India-Japan Relationship Evolved?

- **Early Exchanges:** The historical connection between **Japan and India began in the 6th century with the introduction of [Buddhism to Japan](#)**, which carried significant Indian cultural and philosophical influences.
- **Post- World War II Relations:** In 1949, Indian [Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's](#) donation of an **elephant** to Ueno Zoo (Tokyo) symbolised the beginning of a renewed relationship after [World War II](#).
 - The signing of the **peace treaty and the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1952**, marked one of Japan's first post-war treaties.
 - Post-World War II, Japan's recovery was supported by [Indian iron ore](#), and Japan began providing **yen loans to India starting in 1958**.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** The relationship was further solidified in the 2000s with establishment of a "Global Partnership." Subsequent meetings between leaders, including the elevation to a **"Special Strategic and Global Partnership"** in 2014, highlighted the growing importance of their bilateral ties.
 - In 2015, the "[Japan and India Vision 2025](#)" was announced, outlining a framework for cooperation.
- **Key Areas of Cooperation:**
 - **Defence and Security Cooperation:** The "**Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation**" issued in 2008 set the foundation for ongoing security dialogues, including the "2+2" meetings and the [Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement \(ACSA\) signed in 2020](#).
 - ACSA was signed to facilitate reciprocal provision of supplies and services between the defence forces of both nations.
 - **Economic Relations:** Japan and India's economic ties have strengthened, with Japan being a significant investor in India. As of 2021, **Japan was India's 13th largest trading partner and 5th largest investor**.
 - Key initiatives include the "**India-Japan Industrial Competitiveness Partnership**" and the "**Clean Energy Partnership**" aimed at promoting mutual investment and energy cooperation.
 - During the **2019 G20 Osaka summit**, Japan and India signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to formalize a **sister-city relationship between Ahmedabad and Kobe**.
 - This agreement builds on the 2016 MoU, which established a **sister-state relationship between Gujarat and Hyogo Prefecture**.
 - The [sister-city concept](#) developed **post-World War II**, is designed to promote **peaceful relations, trade, tourism, and cultural exchange** between cities across different countries.
 - Japan has significantly increased its investments in India, **pledging 5 trillion yen (approximately USD 42 billion) in 2023** to be invested over the next five years.
 - India has been the **largest recipient of Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA)**, with notable projects including the Delhi Metro and the **High-Speed Railway initiative** using Japan's Shinkansen system.
 - In FY 2022, Japanese assistance included 567.5 billion yen in loans, alongside grants and technical cooperation.
 - **Cultural Exchanges:** The year 2017, was designated as the **Year of Japan-India Friendly Exchanges**.
 - The "Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year" in 2022 further underscores Japan's commitment to strengthening ties with India and other Southwest Asian countries.

Note: In 1942, **Captain Mohan Singh formed the first Indian National Army (INA)** with Indian **prisoners of war (POWs)** seeking independence from British rule with Japanese aid.

- Disputes with the Japanese Army led to its dissolution by December 1942.
- In **July 1943**, [Subhas Chandra Bose](#) reorganized the INA into the **Azad Hind Fauj**, uniting

former INA soldiers with Indian volunteers.

Key Facts About Japan

- Japan is an island nation in East Asia. Located in the Pacific Ocean. It is an **archipelago of five main islands (Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu, and Okinawa)** and nearly 4,000 smaller ones.
- Japan lies to the **east of the Sea of Japan, China, North Korea, South Korea, and Russia**. It stretches from the **Sea of Okhotsk in the north** to the **East China Sea and Taiwan in the south**.
 - The characters which make up Japan's name mean "**sun-origin**", which is why Japan is sometimes referred to as the "**Land of the Rising Sun**".
- It is mountainous, with the **Japanese Alps** running down Honshu and **Mount Fuji being the highest peak**.
 - The country experiences **frequent earthquakes** and has about 200 volcanoes. It lies along the western edge of the Ring of Fire.
- Japan has a **parliamentary government with a constitutional monarchy**. The Emperor head of the Imperial Family and the ceremonial head of state.



Drishti Mains Question:

Q. Discuss the evolution of India-Japan relations and analyze the key factors that have shaped their bilateral ties. How do these relations impact the broader Indo-Pacific region?

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q1. In which one of the following groups are all four countries members of G20? (2020)

(a) Argentina, Mexico, South Africa and Turkey

(b) Australia, Canada, Malaysia and New Zealand

(c) Brazil, Iran, Saudi Arabia and Vietnam

(d) Indonesia, Japan, Singapore and South Korea

Ans: (a)

Exp:

- The G20 comprises Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, EU, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, UK and USA. Hence Option(a) is correct.

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