

Deepening Indo-Japan Ties

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- In recent times there is evidence of improving Sino-Japanese Ties.
- Amidst such a scenario, India must recalibrate its strategic partnership with Japan.

\n

\n\n

What are the existing bilateral ties between India and Japan?

\n\n

\n

- **Infrastructure** - Between 2000 and 2017, Japan invested \$25.6 billion in domains including infrastructure, retail, textiles, and consumer durables.
- Japan is involved in big-ticket projects like the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC), the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train, and set up around 12 industrial parks across different States.
- India signed a joint high-speed rail project with Japan, for which the first installment of Rs. 5,500 crore was released by Japanese Industrial Cooperation Agency (JICA).
- **Defense co-operation** - India and Japan had hosted various bilateral exercises, recently naval cooperation between the Indian Navy and the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) has held in the Indo-Pacific region.
- **Developmental Projects** - Together, both nations have constituted the Japan-India Act East Forum with an objective of spearheading development cooperation in north-eastern States bordering China, Bangladesh, and Myanmar.

\n

- JICA has signed a \$610-million pact with the Centre for phase I of the North-East connectivity projects.

\n

\n\n

What is the significance of Indo-Japan ties?

\n\n

\n

- Both India and Japan are confronting challenges with volatile global order in the Indo-Pacific region.
- Therefore, cooperation between them, and that too on multiple fronts is both obvious and desirable.
- Their collective interest in forging better and stronger ties has been demonstrated by both the quantity and quality of the reciprocal state visits witnessed in recent years.
- Besides, it is said that the nations' personal rapport and the fact that both of the premiers exhibit similar right-wing nationalist sentiments seem to have brought them on the same page.

\n

\n\n

What is the status of Sino-Japan ties?

\n\n

\n

- The Sino-Japan bilateral trade equals \$300 billion in 2017, a 15 percent increase from the previous year.
- Japanese Logistics Corporation has partnered with its Chinese to open up a trial logistics route from the eastern coast of China to Western Europe and Central Asia.
- The Japan-China rapprochement is governed by multiple factors. Japan needs access to China's market.
- While for China, whose ambitious BRI project is facing hurdles and opposition over the issues of transparency and is constantly being reviewed by successive governments, partnering with Japan will be a

much-needed boost to its image.

\n

- China's economy and currency are facing tough times owing to trade spatting with the US and is willing to partner with other regional powers.

\n

\n\n

What are opportunities before India?

\n\n

\n

- The Japan-America-India (JAI) trilateral summit on the sidelines of G-20, reiterating a free and open Indo-Pacific, hints that the Sino-Japan rapprochement could be "tactical" at best.

\n

- However, these recent developments negate the typical "cold war" dynamics between China and the so-called democratic "Quad" that is increasingly being used to analyze the international politics in Asia.

\n

- Major Asian powers are engaging with each other guided by economic rationale.

\n

- Therefore, Asia is witnessing a strategic flux where power is diffused and demarcation of geopolitical interests are blurred.

\n

- Given the scenario, it is pertinent for New Delhi to not adopt a zero-sum game approach and objectively contextualize the Indo-Japan strategic partnership amidst interchangeable variables of the emerging strategic equation.

\n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Business Line

\n