

INDIA-JAPAN BRIEF

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ABSTRACT

Japan and India constitute two of the oldest democracies in Asia and also stand among Asia's three biggest economies. It was in the year 1952 that India and Japan signed their first treaty and six years later in 1958, India received its first official development assistance from Japan. However, a major breakthrough in the bilateral ties took place only in the year 2000 when Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiko Mori visited India. The visit witnessed establishment of 'Global Partnership between India and Japan'. This relationship was elevated to 'Global and Strategic Partnership' in 2006 which was later followed by up gradation of the bilateral partnership to the status of 'Special Strategic and Global Partnership' in 2014. In December 2015, both Indian and Japanese leaders also laid out the future roadmap of India-Japan ties in a joint statement referred to as 'Japan and India Vision 2025: Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World'. Both the economies also find themselves in a mutually beneficial situation with Japanese economy finding it difficult to sustain economic growth due to its ageing and shrinking population size, whereas India suffers from infrastructural bottlenecks. More importantly, stronger India-Japan alliance also provides impetus to balance and counter the growing Chinese influence and ensure freedom of navigation and multilateralism in the Indo-Pacific. Both the countries also constitute a strong source of mutual support at multilateral level on global issues including each other's candidature as a permanent member of an expanded United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as well as India's membership in the four international nuclear export control regimes among many others.

INTRODUCTION

Building on centuries of commercial and political ties along with favorable Indian policy decisions especially after India's independence, the India-Japan diplomatic relationship was formally established in 1952 with the signing of a peace treaty. Six years later, Japanese government also started providing foreign assistance to India and was India's largest donor by 1986. Importantly, in recent years, this bilateral relationship has become much more strategic in nature due to the changing Asian landscape. Another factor behind the rise in its significance has been the convergence in India and Japan's respective long-term political and economic goals.¹

To strengthen their relationship, India and Japan have also been engaged in crucial annual summits since 2005 along with other initiatives such as the annual strategic dialogue at the foreign minister-level, India-Japan consultations on non-proliferation and disarmament and ministerial-level economic dialogue. Following the up gradation of India-Japan ties to a "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" status during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Japan for the 2014 annual bilateral summit, both Indian and Japanese Prime Minister laid out future of India-Japan ties in a joint statement referred to as "Japan and India Vision 2025: Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World" in December 2015. During the India-Japan annual summit held in 2015, both the countries also extended support for each other's candidature as a permanent member of an expanded United Nations Security Council (UNSC). In addition, Japan has also been a crucial source of support for India's initiative to join the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) along with four international export control regimes (namely the Nuclear Suppliers Group, Missile Technology Control Regime, Wassenaar Arrangement and Australia Group). These groups are essential for India to fulfill its ambition of acquiring a good base of nuclear technology and material supplies.²

SECURITY COOPERATION

India-Japan bilateral relationship in the field of defence and security cooperation jump-started during Japanese Prime Minister Abe's visit to India in August 2007. Since then, both the countries have issued 'Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation' (2008), its 'Action Plan' (2009) and signed an agreement which permitted the Indian Navy and Japan Maritime Self Defence Forces (JMSDF) to engage in joint training on a regular basis (2012). Further, after return to power the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe talked about the 'Diamond Concept' in December 2012. As part of this concept, he visualized the United States, Japan, Australia and India to form a security "diamond" under which these countries were to collaborate to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific. Importantly, both the countries have

engaged in crucial trilateral agreements involving US in one and with Australia constituting the third country in another one.³

Strengthening the security and defence bilateral ties charted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, both the countries have also issued 'Tokyo Declaration for Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership' and 'Japan-India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership' during the 2014 and 2015 India-Japan annual summits respectively. Importantly, during the 2015 summit, both the countries also signed two agreements aimed at enhancing defence and security cooperation. One of the agreements focused on transfer of defence equipment and technology transfer. The second was an agreement concerning the security measures for the protection of classified military information. Overall, these agreements paved the way for robust India-Japan cooperation in the avenues of intelligence exchanges between the Indian Armed Forces and the Japan Self-Defence Force (JSDF) as well as defence technology.⁴

Importantly, during the 2016 summit, both the leaders also expressed intent to set up Joint Working Group on defence equipment and technology cooperation along with reiteration of both the countries' previous commitment to maintain peace in the South China Sea. They also reaffirmed their desire to strengthen bilateral defence ties through the "2+2" Dialogue, Defence Policy Dialogue, Military-to-Military Talks, Coast Guard-to-Coast Guard co-operation and also welcomed the inaugural air force staff talks held during 2016. Prime Minister Modi's appreciation for Japan's willingness to provide its US-2 amphibian aircraft was also a positive sign for future completion of the deal, thus, providing impetus to future procurement of defence related technology from Japan by India.⁵

Crucially, all such initiatives undertaken over the past decade have gone a long way in transforming India-Japan bilateral defence and security relationship as one of Japan's most institutionalized relationship.⁶ All together, India-Japan defence and security cooperation signal a new level of strategic partnership between the two countries which is complementary to India's 'Act East Policy' and Japan's focus on freedom of navigation in the South China sea. In recent times, such a bilateral partnership becomes much more significant given China's growing military assertiveness in the South China sea and uncertainty over US's future role and policy in the Indo-Pacific region.⁷

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

India-Japan economic cooperation has also grown over the past few years. Japan currently holds the position of India's fourth largest investor.⁸ In the financial year 2015-16,

India-Japan bilateral trade stood at a figure of US\$ 14513 million along with a cumulative figure of US\$ 19.43 billion of Japanese foreign investment into India over the time period from 2000 to December 2015. The two countries can also be seen engaging in crucial economic initiatives including the 2011 joint "India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement" (CEPA), which seeks to eliminate around 94% of the tariffs between Japan and India within 10 years. Such initiatives were supplemented in the year 2014 by the "India-Japan Investment Promotion Partnership" signed during Prime Minister Modi's visit to Japan for the bilateral summit. Under this partnership, the Japanese government plans to invest US\$ 33.61 billion in India over the next five years, starting 2014. Both the countries also remain engaged in negotiations for the creation of a "Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership" (RCEP), which seeks to promote regional supply chains and is crucial for India's Act East policy. During the 2015 annual summit, the Japanese government also extended its support for India's candidature as a permanent member of the 'Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation' (APEC), a forum where India has had observer status since 2011.⁹

However, despite such crucial and diverse initiatives, the story at the bilateral trade front as well as with respect to Japanese foreign direct investment (FDI) in India remains disappointing. Moreover, though the total India-Japan bilateral trade witnessed a growth of 33 percent between 2010-11 and 2011-12, there was relative stagnation (or even decline) in the bilateral trade volumes during the subsequent years.¹⁰ Similarly, the exponential growth in Japanese FDI from US\$ 139 million in 2004 to US\$ 5,551 million in 2008, was largely due to a few major deals especially the one pertaining to acquisition of Indian company Ranbaxy by Japanese company Daichi Sankyo. Since this deal Japanese FDI to India has failed to report similar kind of growth with the total investment in the fiscal year 2014-15 being less than that registered during 2011-12.¹¹ The recent trend in India-Japan bilateral trade and Japanese FDI to India is shown more clearly in Figure 1 and 2 respectively.

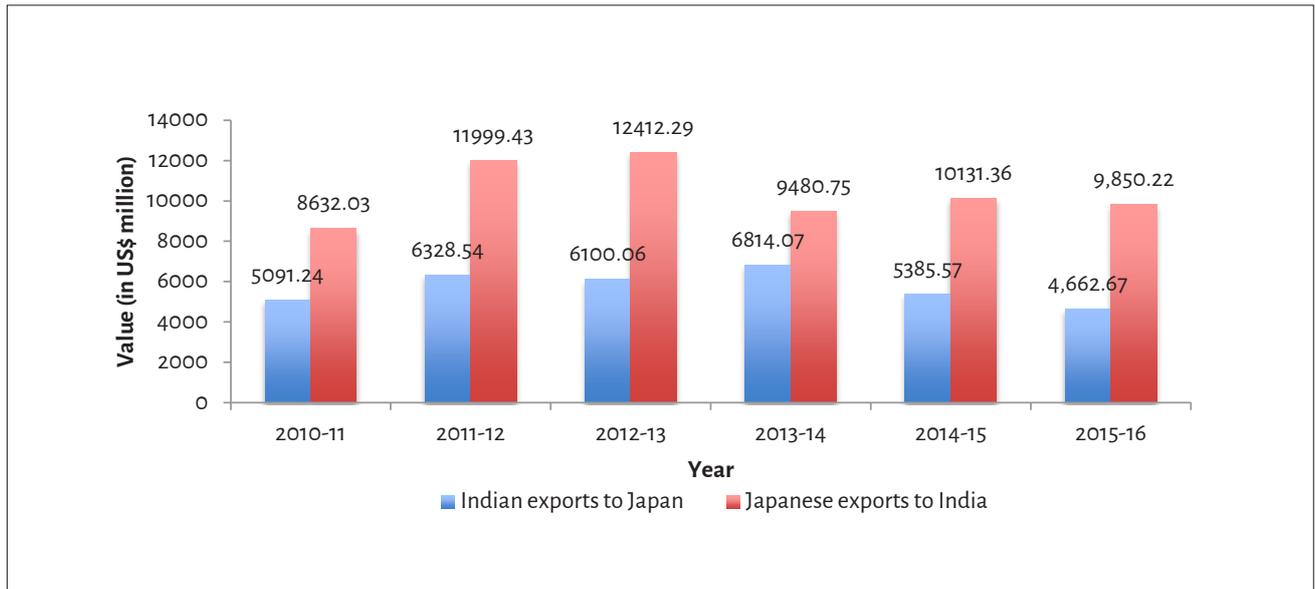
Yet the situation is likely to improve especially on the back of active economic engagement between the two countries through increased number of agreements and memorandum of understanding (MoUs). Important example in this respect are initiatives such as the MoU for Transport and Urban Development signed very recently as well as the Social Security Agreement (SSA) between India and Japan, which is made operational from 1st October 2016. The agreement reduces the cost of doing business and thus, in the process provides an impetus to Japanese companies investing in India especially manufacturing investments.¹²

More importantly, the recent bilateral agreement for Cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is crucial for India to fulfill its energy needs and sustain economic growth. Overall, the forecast of Japanese FDI investment in India is also likely to remain positive as it is largely focused in the automobile, electrical equipment, telecommunications,

chemical and pharmaceutical sectors – all of which are expected to witness a positive trend in the coming years.

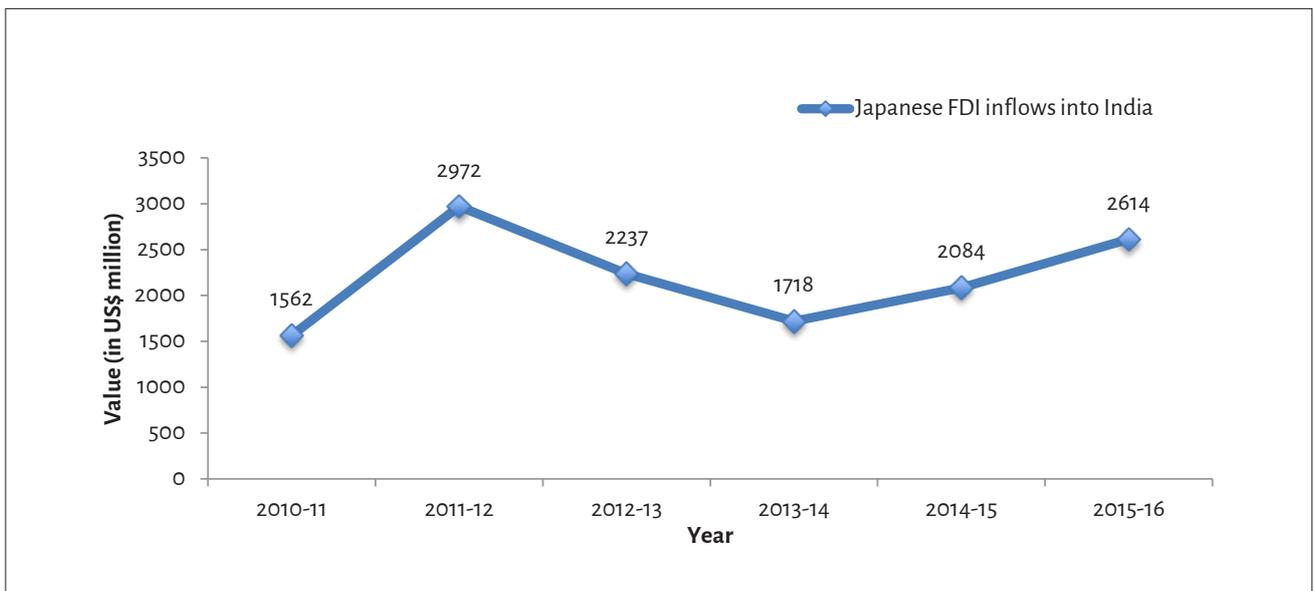
Bilateral efforts such as the 2011 signing of Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) along with regional efforts such as the creation of a Regional Comprehensive

Figure 1: India-Japan Bilateral Trade (Fiscal Year 2010-11 to 2015-16)



Source: Indian Development Cooperation Research (IDCR) Program at the Centre for Policy Research

Figure 2: Japanese FDI Investment in India (Fiscal year 2010-11 to 2014-15)



Source: Indian Development Cooperation Research (IDCR) Program at the Centre for Policy Research

Economic Partnership (RCEP) are also likely to help in reinvigorating India-Japan trade ties.¹³ During the 2016 India-Japan annual bilateral summit, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi also advocated the complimentary between Japan and India for a greater mutual economic relationship.

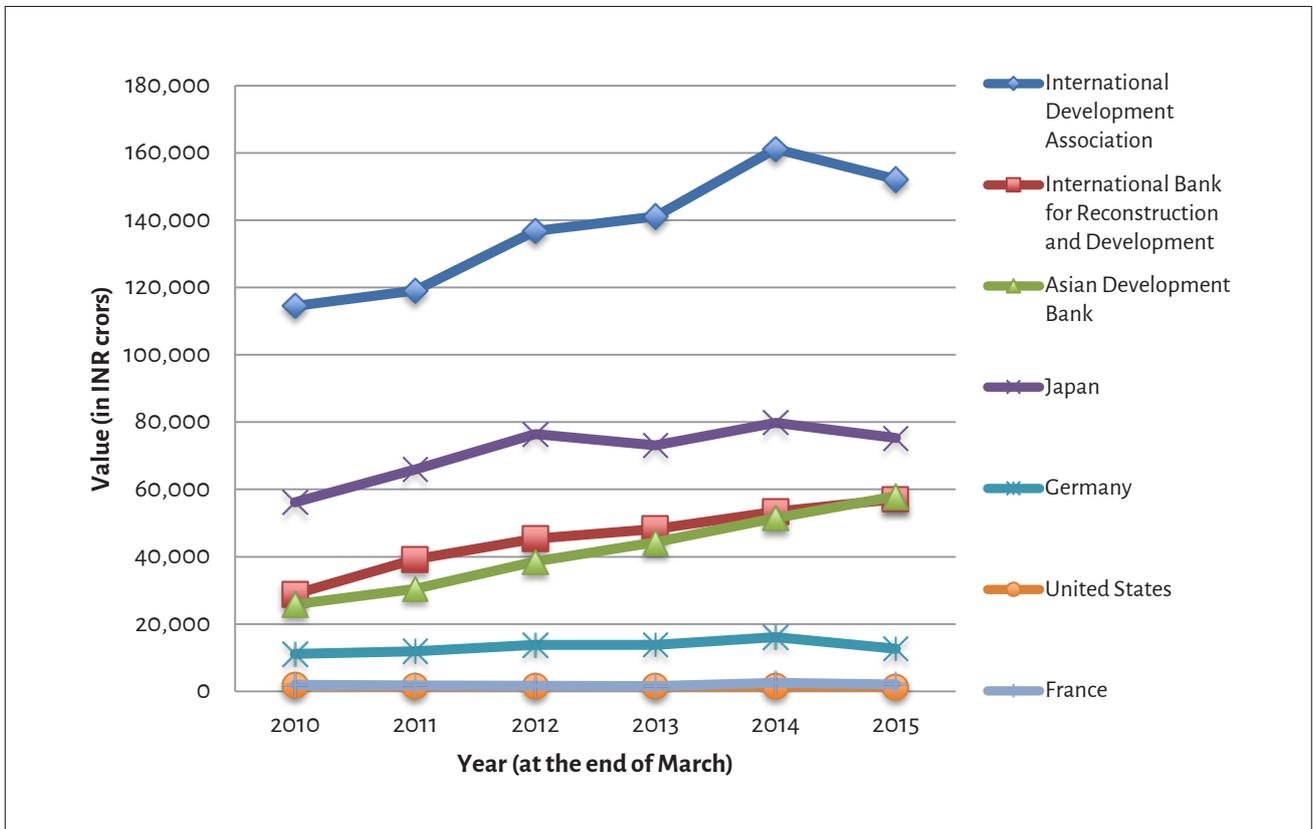
With respect to this, it is important to understand that the Japanese economy is currently plagued by problems related to ageing and shrink in working population, while India despite enjoying a substantial demographic dividend and an expanding economy, is still unable to unleash its full economic potential. This is mainly due to inadequate capital, technology and infrastuctural bottlenecks. Moreover, India needs to create adequate future jobs to utilise its demographic dividend. Thus, greater access to Japanese capital and superior technology will support India's economic growth as well as government initiatives such as Smart Cities project, 'Make in India' and 'Digital India' initiatives. Further, Japan would gain significant dividends from entering Indian markets tapping its vast consumption base and from investing in India's infrastructure sector and

technology exchange.¹⁴

JAPANESE OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE (ODA) DISBURSEMENTS TOWARDS INDIA

India has long been a recipient of Japanese development assistance and ironically, this part of the India-Japan relationship is the most dynamic and the one most likely to invigorate other areas of the bilateral relationship. Japanese government first extended assistance to India in 1958 and was India's largest foreign aid donor country by 1986. Since the turn of the century, the two countries also launched a "Japan-India Global Partnership" (2000), which provides a strong foundation for further strengthening of ties in diverse avenues. This was followed by an up gradation in the India-Japan bilateral ties to a Global and Strategic Partnership (2006) along with reformulation in Japan's assistance program towards India by incorporating diverse set of objectives including promotion of economic growth, poverty reduction, cooperation in field of environment and greater human resource development.¹⁵

Figure 3: Indian government's external debt under external assistance (Multilateral and bilateral sources)



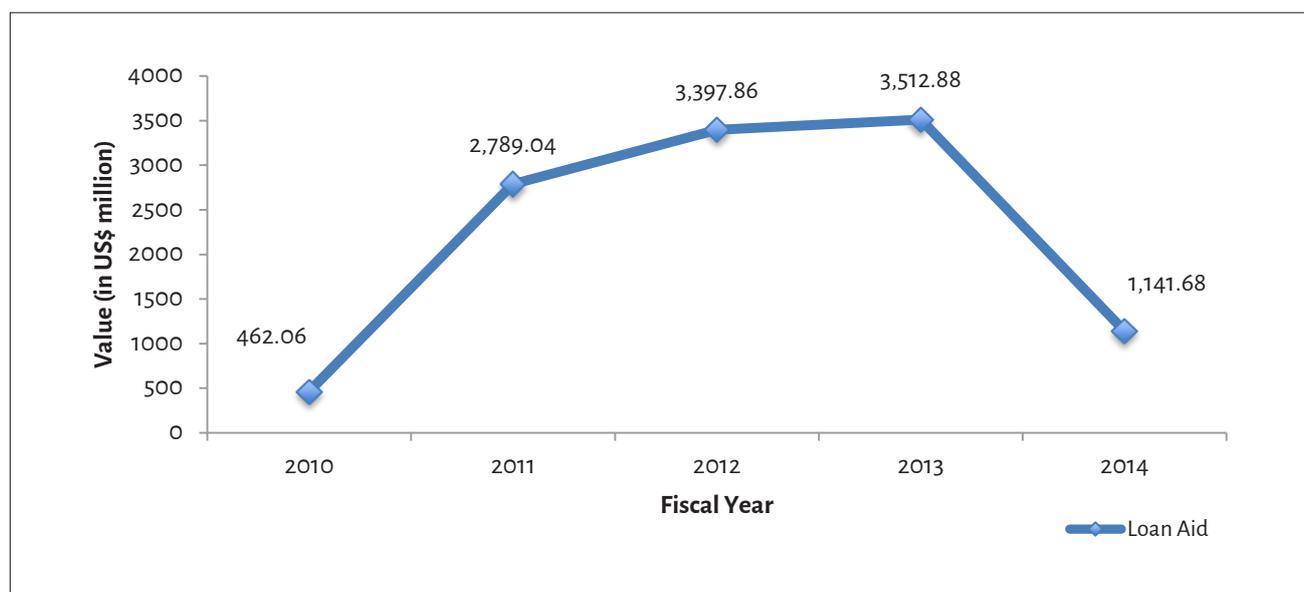
Source: Indian Development Cooperation Research (IDCR) Program at the Centre for Policy Research

Table 1: Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) Disbursements to India by Fiscal Year (US\$ million)

Fiscal Year	Loan Aid	Grant Aid	Technical Cooperation
2010	(462.06)	(11.15)	(21.29)
2011	2,789.04)	(2.67)	(33.38)
2012	(3,397.86)	(1)	(31.76)
2013	(3,512.88)	(15.99)	(41.97)
2014	(1,141.68)	(2.08)	(36.33)

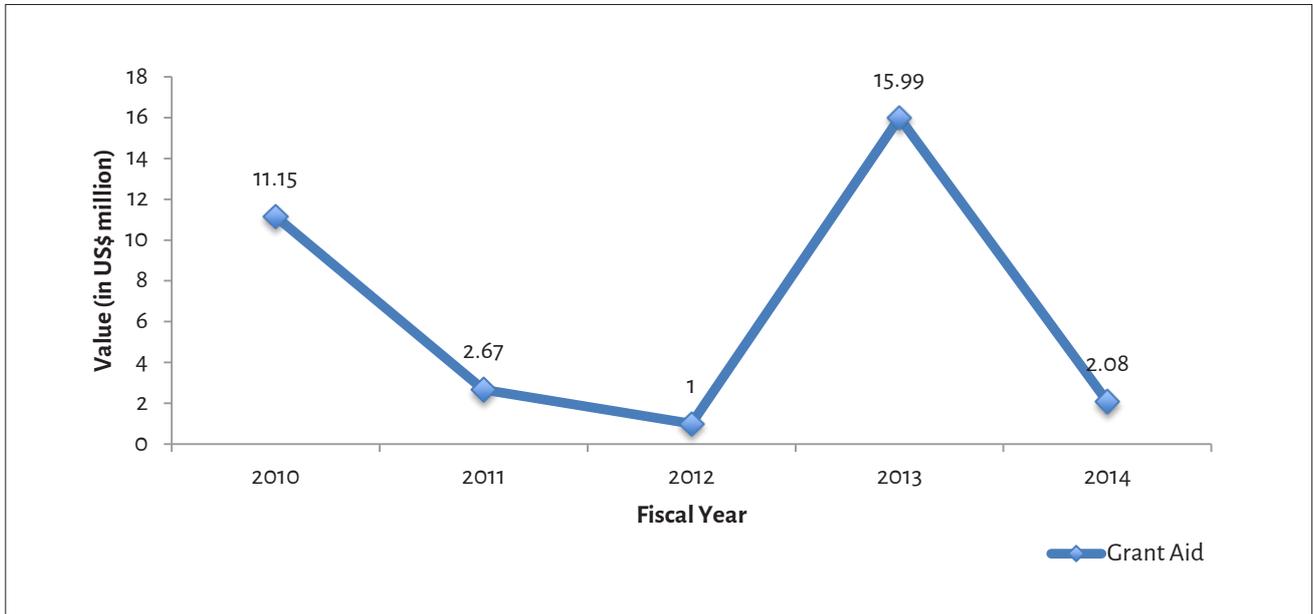
Note: 1) The yearly figures for Loan Aid and Grant Aid are based on the amount of assistance agreed to through exchange of notes during the fiscal year. However, Grant Assistance for Japanese NGOs, Cultural Grassroots and Grassroots Human Security projects within Grand Aid depends on grant contracts (G/C). A yearly figure for Technical Cooperation indicates the amount of fund disbursed from the budget of JICA, relevant ministries and local governments in the fiscal year. 2) The figures for Technical Cooperation up to the fiscal year 2013 indicate the amount of Technical Cooperation carried out by all relevant authorities. Fiscal year 2014 shows the amount of Technical Cooperation implemented by JICA. Source: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Figure 4 (a): Japanese Loan Aid Disbursements to India by Fiscal Year (US\$ million)



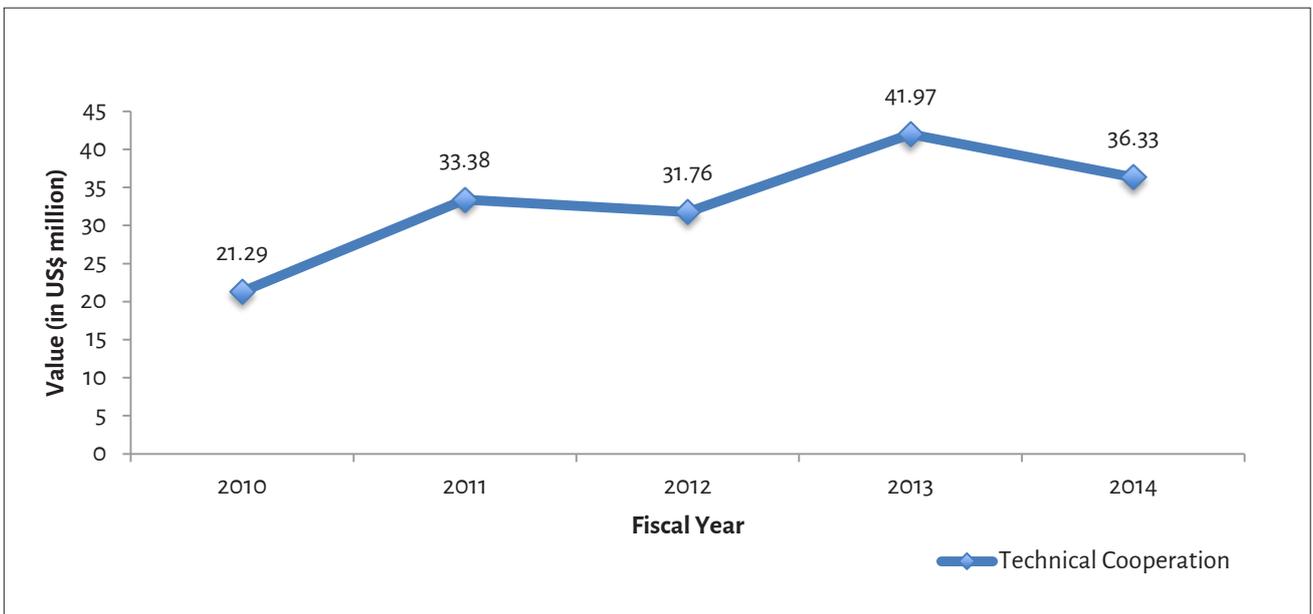
Source: Indian Development Cooperation Research (IDCR) Program at the Centre for Policy Research

Figure 4 (b): Japanese Grant Aid Disbursements to India by Fiscal Year (US\$ million)



Source: Indian Development Cooperation Research (IDCR) Program at the Centre for Policy Research

Figure 4 (c): Japanese Technical Cooperation Disbursements to India by Fiscal Year



Source: Indian Development Cooperation Research (IDCR) Program at the Centre for Policy Research

During India and Japan 2014 annual bilateral summit, India-Japan ties were further strengthened by the “Tokyo Declaration for Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership (2014). Importantly, as part of this partnership, Prime Minister Abe extended around US\$ 33.61 billion (3.5 trillion yen) of public and private investments towards India. This included Official Development Assistance (ODA) for financing projects in varied avenues such as infrastructure, transport systems, smart cities, rejuvenation of rivers, manufacturing, clean energy, skill development, water security, food processing and agro industry, and rural development.¹⁶ Importantly, prior to this, Japan in the ‘May 2013 Joint Declaration, also agreed to invest heavily in the freight and industrial corridors linking Delhi and Mumbai and extended financial assistance for metro railway projects modeled on the successful Delhi Metro and high-speed railway (Shinkansen) systems.¹⁷

Some of the crucial projects financed through Japanese ODA loans up till now include large undertakings such as the Delhi Metro, Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) project. In addition to these, Japanese government has also extended ODA loans for infrastructure projects such as the Yamuna Action Plan Project (III), Bihar National Highway Improvement Project, Bangalore Metro Rail Project (II).¹⁸ An ODA loan of US\$ 480 million (50 billion yen) extended for a public-private partnership project, towards India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) was also included in the package extended by Japanese government towards India in 2014.¹⁹

Since Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Japan in 2014, there has been a significant increase in Japanese investment commitment towards India. Moreover, the Japanese government has expressed its interest in enhancing infrastructure investment projects such as India’s Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS), Ahmedabad metro, up gradation of ship-breaking yard at Alang Soshiya in Gujarat along with development of industrial cities in Gujarat and Maharashtra and integrated industrial townships in UP and Madhya Pradesh.¹⁹ Even during Prime Minister Modi’s recent visit for the India and Japan 2016 annual bilateral summit, the Japanese government showed keenness to support India’s varied initiatives such as “Make in India,” “Digital India,” “Skill India,” “Clean India” and “Smart City” through sharing of its advanced skills and technologies and active mobilization of investments including Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Enhanced Japanese ODA loans in varied Indian projects also formed a key facet of the Japanese Prime Minister Abe’s visit

to India for the India-Japan bilateral annual summit in 2015. Some of the crucial announcements made during the 2015 summit have also been mentioned in the section below:

Northeastern Indian border region and Andaman and Nicobar Islands

Japan has also undertaken the crucial task of funding US\$ 744 million road building project in the northeastern Indian border regions of Assam, Meghalaya and Mizoram. Furthermore, like northeastern India, Andaman and Nicobar chains due to its separation from the mainland remain undeveloped. In this respect New Delhi for the first time is planning to allow foreign investment in the archipelago. Importantly, there have been talks of the current Indian government engaging with Japan for upgrading civilian infrastructure on these islands. The first project being discussed in this respect is a 15-megawatt diesel power plant on South Andaman Island. This has been mentioned in a proposal submitted by India to the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs around the month of February, 2016.²¹

Crucially, these islands hold a significant strategic importance in the region. The proximity of these islands to the Malacca Strait place them in a strategic position with regards to surveillance of the crucial sea lines of communication. Furthermore, about a third of India’s Exclusive Economic Zone also lies around the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, which occupy an important position in India’s “Act East” policy and maritime security strategy.²²

INDIA-JAPAN ANNUAL SUMMIT 2014: JAPAN COMMITS 3.5 TRILLION YEN TOWARDS INDIA’S DEVELOPMENT OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Though the summit discussions were full of statements and lofty rhetoric about India and Japan’s friendship and strong bilateral ties, however, the final agreement on key pending deals was still not reached. The most important of these was the long-standing issue of civil nuclear cooperation agreement between the two countries. Further, though there was a complimentary between India’s increase of investment cap in its defence industry and Japan’s legislation to allow military exports, however, both the countries were unable to arrive at a final decision on the issue of India’s export of Japanese US-2 amphibious aircraft. Tokyo’s desire to establish a crucial two-plus-two ministerial framework also failed to materialize. However, the summit can be categorized as an important contributor to the slew of future deals between Indian Prime Minister Modi and his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe.²³

Table 2: Crucial financing based initiatives undertaken by the Japanese government to support India's future development (India and Japan 2015 annual bilateral summit)

Projects	Amount
Metro projects both in Chennai and Ahmedabad: Japanese Prime Minister has committed funds of around for metro projects both in Chennai and Ahmedabad.	US\$ 962.28 million (100 billion yen)
Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) project: Prime Minister Abe also agreed to take the Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) project to the next stage of implementation by extending ODA loan schemes and other facility measures.	
Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on introduction of Japan's High Speed Railways (HSR) technologies (the Shinkansen system) to Mumbai-Ahmedabad route: Japanese government also assured technical and financial support in form of an ODA loan of over USD 12 billion for introducing high-speed train system on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route using Japan's Shinkansen bullet trains. Further, this loan has been extended for a period of 50 years with a moratorium of 15 years, at an interest rate of 0.1 per cent.	US\$ 12 billion
Abe during his visit also expressed desire to forward ODA loans for multiple projects including	
a) Improvement of road network to the northeastern states of India	US\$ 644.73 million (67 billion yen)
b) Development of peripheral ring road surrounding Bengaluru	US\$ 433.02 million (45 billion yen)
c) Horticulture irrigation project in Jharkhand	US\$ 48.11 million (5 billion yen)

Sources: 1) See "Joint Statement on India and Japan Vision 2025: Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World (December 12, 2015), 12th December 2015, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. 2) See "Fact Sheet: India and Japan, Working Together for Peace and Prosperity," 12th December 2015, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Most importantly, the summit was significant from the stand point of economic ties between the two nations. During the summit, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe committed 3.5 trillion yen towards India in yen denominated loans and investments during the next five years.

These funds constituted a mixture of private sector investments and official development assistance to be spent on development projects including building of smart cities, rail, and road network industrial development. In Kyoto, a pact was signed confirming Japan's support in the development of Prime Minister Modi's Lok Sabha constituency Varanasi on the pattern of Kyoto 'Smart City'. Both the leaders also signed agreements in the domain of defence exchange, cooperation in clean energy, roads and highways, healthcare and women. Furthermore, Prime Minister Modi used the summit as an opportunity to highlight India's evolving pro-business environment. In this respect, India conveyed its decision to set up a Special Management team under the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) for facilitating investment proposals from Japan.²⁴

Thus, overall the summit can be classified as an economic success, which also contributed positively towards the scope of future, deals on strategic and normative issues. Importantly, during the summit both the leaders also affirmed their desire to accelerate talks on issues pertaining to civil nuclear deal, introduction of bullet trains in India and the export of the Japanese US-2 amphibious aircrafts.²⁵

A FOCUS ON CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT DURING INDIA AND JAPAN 2015 ANNUAL BILATERAL SUMMIT

The India and Japan annual bilateral summit held in 2015 was of significance due to the Japanese government's positive attitude in contributing towards India's growth and that too in a big manner. Moreover, some of the crucial agreements signed during the visit that are testament to Japanese government's commitment towards India's development especially through mobilization of funds in form of ODA loans are mentioned below (Table 2): In addition to these, there has also been a significant focus by the Japanese government on promoting capacity building

and skill development in India. This can be well seen through some of the initiatives undertaken by Japanese Prime Minister Abe during India and Japan 2015 annual bilateral summit. These included establishment of joint research centers along with enhancement of exchanges between young scientists and those under the "Japan-Asia Youth Exchange Program in Science". Further, Prime Minister Abe also announced funding of 10,000 young Indian talents to visit Japan over the next five years under frameworks such as

students exchange, IT training and short term exchanges.²⁶ Both the countries during the 2015 bilateral annual summit also signed multiple agreements and MoUs for enhancing synergies arising out of stronger India-Japan economic ties. One of the most significant developments in this respect was the signing of the MoU on civil nuclear energy cooperation. This was extremely crucial from India's point of view as it allow India to address its expanding energy need while keeping the carbon emissions under control. Importantly,

Table 3: Brief summary of crucial recent developments in India-Japan ties

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on civil nuclear energy cooperation

Extension of Japanese ODA loans for the Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) project

Agreement between the Government of the Republic of India and the Government of Japan concerning Security Measures for the Protection of Classified Military Information

Agreement concerning the Transfer of the Defence Equipment and Technology

Memorandum of Cooperation between Ministry of Railways and Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Japan on Technological Cooperation in Rail Sector

Memorandum of Understanding between Railway Technical Research Institute of Japan and Research Designs and Standards Organization of India on Research and Development (R&D) collaboration in the railway sector

MOC in the Field of Education between the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan and the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Republic of India.

MoUs between local governments over the last year:

State Government of Karnataka and the Mie prefecture

State Government of Tamil Nadu and the Kanagawa prefecture

State Government of Kerala and the Sanin region; Lake Nakaumi, Lake Shinji and Mt. Daisen Area Mayors Association

State Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Toyama prefecture

MOC on Medical Products Regulation Dialogue and Cooperation Framework

Some other Crucial developments:

Japanese support towards rejuvenation of the Ganga River: Commencement of the preparatory survey by Japan for Ganga rejuvenation, targeting Varanasi city and neighboring cities.

Japanese government also expressed its intention of establishing "Japan-India Internet of Things (IoT) Investment Initiative."

Sources: 1) See "Joint Statement on India and Japan Vision 2025: Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World (December 12, 2015), 12th December 2015, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. 2) See "Fact Sheet: India and Japan, Working Together for Peace and Prosperity," 12th December 2015, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

this MoU also comes as an exception to the Japanese policy of not conducting nuclear commerce with a state that is not signatory of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).²⁷

Further, during his visit the Japanese Prime Minister also affirmed Japan's willingness to financially support India's "Act East" policy by developing and strengthening "reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructures that augment

connectivity within India and between India and other countries in the region. The two prime ministers also reaffirmed their intention to develop "Japan Industrial Townships (JIITs)" in India, with both the countries working towards evolving special packages for Japanese investment in these industrial townships. The Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) along with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) also committed a sum of

US\$ 12.34 billion (1.5 trillion yen) for promoting Japanese imports and Japanese companies' direct investment in India. These funds were earmarked for supporting business activities in India including development of infrastructure and materialization of Indian government's "Make in India" initiative.²⁸

Multiple MoUs at state level were also signed. Under these agreements, Japanese state governments have agreed to develop trade, investment and economic relations between the business circles particularly SMEs of Kerala and also enhance mutual collaboration in interest areas of economic exchange, pharmaceutical production, tourism and academic exchange with the government of Andhra Pradesh.²⁹

This flurry of new arrangements and MOUs between the two countries are indicative of a closer India-Japan strategic relationship on multiple fronts, particularly in the technical and economic sectors.³⁰

In September 2016, the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi again met his Japanese counterpart Shinzo Abe on the sidelines of the ASEAN and East Asia Summits in the Laotian capital. Importantly, this was their second meeting in less than six months, with the earlier one taking place on the sidelines of the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April. During this meet, the two leaders sought strengthening of ties in the domain of counter-terrorism, civil nuclear cooperation, trade and investment. Prime Minister Modi also highlighted complementary in India-Japan ties with Japan possessing technology and innovation and India having a high percentage of young population and huge markets. The partnership could, therefore, prove to be a win-win relation.³¹

INDIA-JAPAN ANNUAL SUMMIT 2016: INDIA BECOMES THE FIRST NON-NPT SIGNATORY MEMBER TO ENTER IN A CIVIL NUCLEAR PACT WITH JAPAN

During Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi's recent visit to Japan, both the countries inked crucial bilateral agreements in varied avenues. These included agreements in the domain of nuclear energy, space science, agriculture, urban development, environment, marine and earth science, training, textile and sports. However, most important of these was the agreement for cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Finalization of this agreement has involved multiple steps of negotiation, since talks of this first began in 2006 during the then Indian Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Japan. Most importantly, with signing of this agreement, India became the first non-NPT signatory country to enter in such a civil nuclear pact with Japan. The agreement has been described in further detail in the section

below.³²

Civil Nuclear Deal

The signing of civil nuclear deal between India and Japan is a crucial impetus to the already burgeoning India-Japan bilateral relations. The agreement is significant from both economic and strategic point of view. It helps India to address its growing demand for electricity to feed its growing industrial sector in a sustainable and more environment friendly manner. With Japan being an active player in civil nuclear market the agreement will also be helpful to major corporations such as Westinghouse to set up nuclear plants in India. It is also expected to breathe life into Japan's failing nuclear industry especially considering given India's plans to incorporate nuclear power in its energy mix.³³

Such a step also counterbalances China's growing influence in the Indo-Pacific region. China did stall India's bid for the membership of Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) on the basis of it not being a signatory to the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). This move on China's part also needs to be viewed from a strategic point of view. China is uncomfortable with India's increasing proximity with Japan and US in the Pacific region, its disregard towards China's position in the South China Sea and wariness towards development of Chinese sponsored China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Moreover, such a blockage also goes well with Pakistan, Beijing's closest ally in South Asia. However, in contrast to China's bid of countering India's entry into nuclear export control regimes, Japan has entered into one of its kind civil nuclear deal with India and welcomed India's accession to Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the Hague Code of Conduct against the Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOG). It has also reaffirmed its support towards India becoming full member of the remaining three export control regimes (namely the Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement and the Australia Group).³⁴

However, by convincing Tokyo to sign the civil nuclear deal, India has moved in the direction of achieving to ramp up its nuclear capacity. This is also a significant indication of the burgeoning close ties between the two countries. From an economic point of view, the civil nuclear deal is highly lucrative for both India and Japan. With Japan trying to phase out nuclear power after the Fukushima disaster in 2011, this deal provides new markets for selling such technology.³⁵

However, the agreement was accompanied by a note titled 'Note on Views and Understanding' in which Japan cited India's September 2008 commitment of unilateral ban on atomic tests, emphasizing violation of the commitment to result in termination of the deal. Thus, under the Article 14, Japan has a right to terminate its cooperation and

other engagements stipulated in the contract. This was crucial for signing of the deal given domestic opposition against such deals especially more so in case of a non-NPT member. Moreover, Japan also remains bound by the Nuclear Suppliers Group's trigger list of prohibited and dual-use items, thus, denying Delhi access to some of the sought after technologies including lasers and certain alloys. Thus, this leaves India pretty much dependent on the membership in the elite Nuclear Suppliers group for fulfillment of its future nuclear energy ambitions. But one can surely not deny the positive impetus and impact of the deal with respect to the future potential of India-Japan ties and India's global as well as regional position.³⁶

Deferment of ShinMaywa US-2 amphibious aircraft deal by India

Like the civil nuclear agreement, another crucial issue which has been long pending between Japan and India is the sale of ShinMaywa US-2 amphibious search and rescue aircrafts to the India Navy. Possession of these aircrafts is crucial for India to better surveil its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the Arabian Sea and Indian Ocean Region (IOR), ensure speedy response to incidents near the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and assist other countries in the region.³⁷ However, contrary to expectations of finalizing procurement of twelve such aircrafts from Japan during the recent India-Japan Annual Summit (2016), the proposal was deferred by Indian Defence Ministry. The ministry plans to engage in further discussion with the Indian navy on requirement of these planes for the Indian navy.³⁸ But the deal is expected to be finalized in the coming future and importantly, successful completion of this deal would enable India to procure wider varieties of defence related technology from Japan. Further, possession of such aircrafts would assist India in maintaining peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific which is crucial given growing Chinese dominance in the region and uncertainty

around future U.S. foreign policy in the region.³⁹

Development of Chabahar Port

During the recently concluded India-Japan Annual Summit, both the leaders also showed intent to chalk out a plan for Japan's involvement in the development of the crucial Chabahar port. This wasn't the first time that Japan officially suggested a positive outlook towards proposal for enhanced connectivity in the region.⁴⁰ Such a partnership between India and Japan also finds context in the statement announced at conclusion of Abe's visit to New Delhi in December, 2015. From India's perspective, Japan's involvement in the port project can very well help to reinforce project's economic viability and strategic value. Importantly, development of the port is pivotal for it to boost its economic ambitions in Afghanistan and Central Asia as well as to circumvent Pakistan in regional trade activities. However, one cannot ignore Japan's interest from the port project. Japan itself is highly dependent on hydrocarbons from Persian Gulf. Its energy dependency on the Gulf accounts for 80% of its hydrocarbon imports. As per its 2006 energy policy, Japan aims for greater security with respect to its energy resource by involving itself in the hydrocarbon infrastructure of major oil producing states. Overall, such collaboration on the port development will enable India and Japan to strengthen their oil supply networks, trade terms as well as strategic profile in the region.⁴¹

In addition to the above, both the head of states also reaffirmed mutual support on crucial global issues including the issue of climate change, countering terrorism, reform of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). Moreover, both the leaders' insistence on increased engagement between India's 'Act East Policy' and Japan's 'Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' was a testament to India and Japan's desire of counterbalancing growing Chinese dominance in the Indo-Pacific region. Further, due attention was also given to India's

Table 4: Crucial Agreements signed during Modi's visit to Japan in November 2016

Agreements	Brief Description
Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy	This agreement would allow collaboration between Indian and Japanese industries in our Civil Nuclear program and provide for the development of nuclear power projects in India.
Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) on the Manufacturing Skill Transfer Promotion Program	This MoC was inked between the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan. Under this MoC, around 30000 Indian youth are expected to be trained in the Japanese style manufacturing over the next 10 years. This is to be carried out through the programs of Japan-India Institute for Manufacturing (JIM) and the Japanese Endowed Courses (JEC) in select Engineering colleges. Japanese companies are also to be encouraged to set-up JIM by utilizing their CSR fund while Government of Japan will support JEC through technical experts.

<p>Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Cooperation in the Field of Outer Space</p>	<p>This MoU was inked between between Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) and Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). It provides for cooperation in satellite navigation, planetary exploration and space industry promotion as well as joint missions, personnel exchange and use of ground systems for mutual support. It also seeks to establish joint working group and sign Implementing Arrangements to carry out specific cooperative projects.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Mutual Collaboration in Marine and Earth Science and Technology</p>	<p>It was signed between Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC). This MoU aims at promoting cooperation in the areas of joint survey, research and other mutually agreed forms of cooperation.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the Field of Agriculture and Food Related Industry:</p>	<p>It was signed between the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan. The MoC aims at deepening the bilateral cooperation in the fields of agriculture and food industries that includes food value chain networking and protecting Geographical Indication (GI) of agriculture products.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Transport and Urban Development:</p>	<p>The pact seeks to enable cooperation between National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited and Japan Overseas Infrastructure Investment Corporation. The cooperation includes promotion in investment in infrastructure projects in railways and transport, toll roads, urban development, port and airport terminals, logistics and any supporting industries for these sectors. The MoU also enables the two sides to explore opportunities to set up an NIIF-JOIN joint fund.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in the Field of Textiles</p>	<p>This MoU was signed between Textiles Committee of Union Ministry of Textiles and Japan Textiles Products Quality and Technology Centre (QTEC). It involves capacity building measures for the Textiles Committee and aligns the Indian Quality Control measures in line with Japanese market and technical standards.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) in the Field of Cultural Exchange</p>	<p>The MoC was signed between the Union Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Government of Japan. It seeks to provide a framework for bilateral cooperation in the field of Sports ahead of the forthcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympics & Paralympics.</p>
<p>Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the fields of academics, business, cultural cooperation, disaster management and environmental protection:</p>	<p>This MoU was signed between the State Government of Gujarat and Hyogo Prefectural Government, Japan. As per the agreement, a steering committee will be constituted to oversee the implementation of the MOU. It will also identify the agencies to carry out designated activities.</p>
<p>References: See “India-Japan joint statement during the visit of Prime Minister to Japan”, 11th November 2016, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.</p>	

ambition of becoming a major center for manufacturing and investments for the twenty first century knowledge industries. In this respect, the Japanese government showed intent in assisting India through technology provision as well as mobilization of Japanese private and public investments including those extended in form of ODA.⁴² The two leaders also took stock of the Mumbai Ahmedabad high-speed railways (MAHSR) project and laid down future schedule of the project.

CONCLUSION

Over the past few years, consistent engagement between India and Japan has transformed the bilateral relationship into a significant, broad-based and strategically oriented one. Both the countries have been intent on strengthening ties in both economic and defence domain and work towards influencing the future Asia-Pacific landscape. Abe and Modi are also wary of China's growing presence as well as the vacuum which can be created by a declining US involvement

in the region especially given uncertainty over US's future foreign policy. India and Japan also look to complement each other economically with Japan providing India with capital and technology and finding new markets in the process. More importantly, Japan's initiatives such as its keenness to invest heavily in India, amending of constitution to allow defence relations with India, playing a role in India's high-end infrastructural development and making drastic exemption to enter into an extremely crucial and significant civil nuclear deal with India are all signs of a much stronger India-Japan relationship in the future.⁴³

APPENDIX NOTE

All currency conversions in the brief are carried out using oanda software (available at www.oanda.com) and based on the exchange rate as on 22nd October 2016.

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