

India and Japan Deepen Strategic Defense Partnership



India and Japan are actively exploring new avenues to strengthen their bilateral defense cooperation and enhance military collaboration, signaling a shared commitment to regional security and a rules-based international order. Discussions between top military officials on Friday, July 25, 2025, focused on expanding existing partnerships and exploring joint initiatives to address evolving security challenges in the Indo-Pacific.

In a video conference, General Upendra Dwivedi, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) of the Indian Army, engaged with General Yasunori Morishita, Chief of Staff of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF). The high-level exchange centered on issues of mutual interest, with a particular emphasis on fostering stronger bilateral defense ties, increasing military collaboration, and identifying potential joint initiatives aimed at bolstering regional security. This dialogue is part of a series of regular interactions between the defense establishments of both nations, reflecting the growing strategic convergence between New Delhi and Tokyo.

The partnership between India and Japan, elevated to a "Special Strategic and Global Partnership," has seen consistent growth, particularly in the defense sector. Both nations share similar perspectives on maintaining a Free, Open, and Inclusive Indo-Pacific, a vision that directly influences their robust security cooperation. This shared strategic outlook is increasingly vital given the complex geopolitical landscape in the region.

Military-to-military engagements have been a cornerstone of this relationship. Both the Indian Armed Forces and the Japan Self-Defense Forces participate in a variety of bilateral and

multilateral exercises across all three services. Notable examples include the annual "Dharma Guardian" exercise between the armies, the "JIMEX" naval exercise, and the "Veer Guardian" air exercise between the air forces. These drills enhance interoperability, build mutual understanding, and strengthen coordination for future contingencies.

Beyond joint exercises, cooperation extends to defense equipment and technology. Both countries have an agreement concerning Reciprocal Provisions of Supplies and Services, which streamlines logistical support during joint operations and exercises. Discussions also involve potential transfers of advanced defense technologies and collaboration in defense manufacturing. Japan has also shown interest in India's emerging defense corridors, exploring opportunities for its private sector to participate.

The ongoing discussions underscore India's "Act East Policy" and Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Vision," both aiming to foster stability and prosperity in the region. As key members of the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad), alongside the United States and Australia, India and Japan are committed to safeguarding maritime routes, ensuring freedom of navigation, and collectively addressing non-traditional security threats. This continuous engagement between India and Japan highlights their growing importance as pillars of stability and security in the Indo-Pacific.