

# From Asia to Africa, India-Japan Defence Partnership Aggressively Countering China

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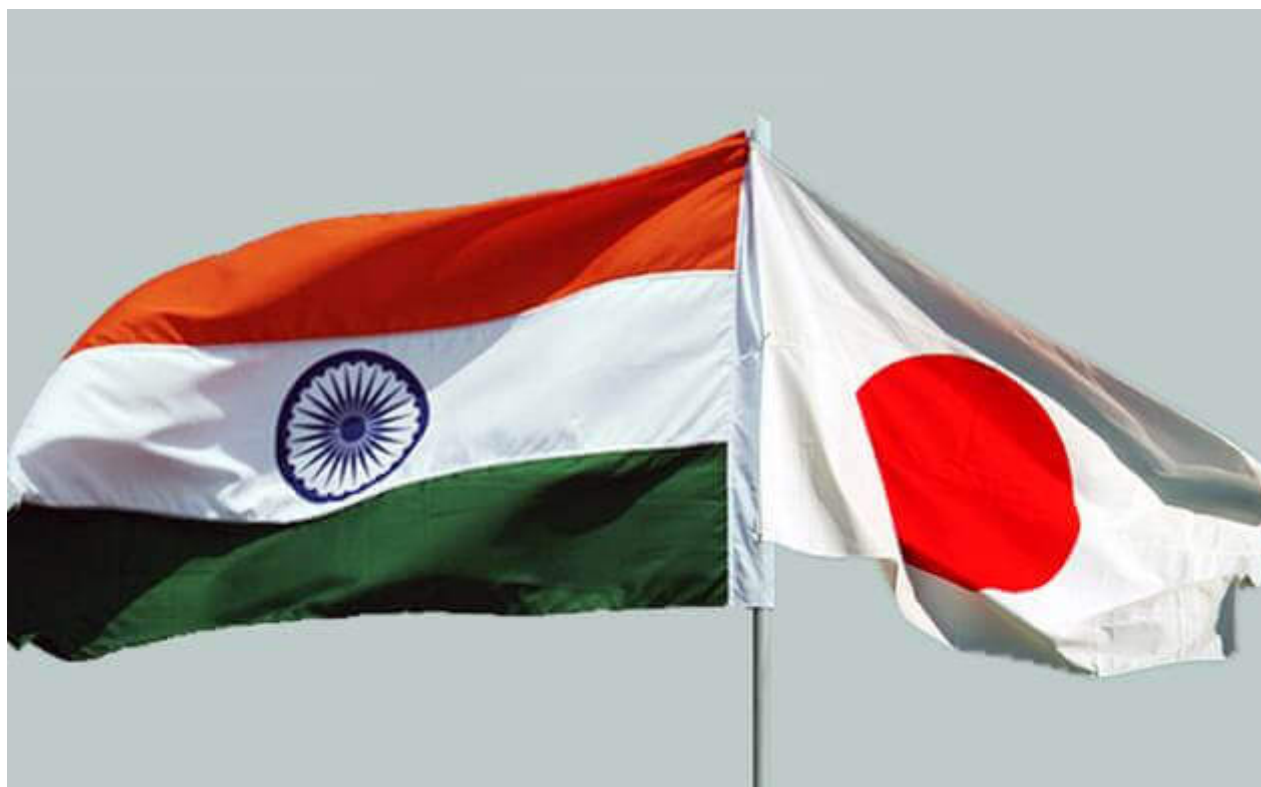
Asia Pacific

By

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**One reason why India-Japan Defence Partnership and Relations blossomed is due to Chinese hostility and belligerence at the Indian Ocean. India and Japan have collaborated on various defence projects around the Indian Ocean, besides partnering in the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor. So why is China disturbed by growing India-Japan defence relationship?**

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## Japan Spending Billions on Defence Projects

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China's growing presence in the Indian Ocean, often referred as "String of Pearls" has been making India very anxious. However, India is not the only nation worried by the aggressive expansionist strategies of China. Japan, which has been a strategic ally of the US and remains

under their defence umbrella, has been striving to bolster infrastructure investments in key Indian Ocean ports to counter and contain Chinese belligerence.

In 2015, Japan announced its intentions to spend billions of dollars on infrastructure projects, and since 2016, Japan has already committed approximately \$8 billion to develop key ports and related infrastructure around the Indian Ocean.

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According to certain media reports, "Japan's investments in the Indian Ocean region rivals that of China. These projects are part of Japanese PM Shinzo Abe's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy, intended to connect Asia with Africa and the Pacific with the Indian Ocean.

### **India-Japan Defence Relationship in Key Asian Ports**

The projects at present under consideration includes a joint project with India and Sri Lanka to expand an existing Trincomalee Port in Sri Lanka, a joint project with Myanmar and Thailand (which may also include India) to build a new port and special economic zone (SEZ) around Dawei in Myanmar, and a project with Bangladesh to develop the Matarbari Port.

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India-Japan strong relations can also be gauged by New Delhi effort to secure and influence Bangladesh's decision to award the Matarbari project to Tokyo. India and Japan could also collaborate at the Trincomalee Port in Sri Lanka and Chabahar Port in Iran.



India and Japan also announced the **Asia-Africa Growth Corridor** in May 2017 to further expand ties. The Asia-Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC) is another example of strong India-Japan relationship, planned to counter to China's BRI Project (Belt and Road Initiative)

### **Indian Military Base in Sabang can Strangle China at the Strait of Malacca**

Earlier, as reported by EurAsian Times, China became increasingly concerned about the possible Indian military base in Sabang port in Indonesia. Indonesia permitted India to invest in Sabang port, located near the strategic and vital shipping channel – the Strait of Malacca. China’s widespread use of the Malacca Strait means that India (possibly with Japan) can considerably threaten China by choking vital supplies from the Sabang Port.

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