

## Philippines is now looking towards Japan and India for development, read the editorial of November 22

The Philippines, after abandoning a major Chinese-led project due to geopolitical concerns, is now turning its attention to Japan and India as alternative sources of development and security.

Transportation Secretary Jaime Bautista agreed to the move earlier this month, when he said the Philippine government was ready to use the two countries for development.

The statement coincides with Manila's desire to behave as a responsible neighbour, and not to be treated like Beijing, as well as to deepen and broaden its security and economic partnerships with like-minded partners.

Under the leadership of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the Philippines has been a clear signal to secure its independence and its rights in the West Philippine Sea against China's interests in the Indo-Pacific.

Furthermore, central to Marcos Jr.'s foreign policy has been his intention to work together with like-minded traditional and non-traditional partners.



मनीला द्वारा टोक्यो और नई दिल्ली दोनों को महत्वपूर्ण पार्टनर के रूप में प्रस्तुत करना, तीनों लोकतंत्रों को बहुआयामी रणनीतिक सहयोग के लिए नए अवसर तलाशने की अनुमति देता है।

फिलीपींस और जापान एक करीबी रणनीतिक साझेदारी एक दूसरे के साथ बांटते हैं, जिसमें फिलीपींस, मनीला का प्रमुख इन्वेस्टर और विदेशी विकास सहायता (ODA) का सबसे बड़ा सोर्स है।

While these partnerships traditionally work for the United States' hub-and-spokes system.

Bilateral relations are now becoming increasingly important with Tokyo becoming an independent power, with Tokyo seeking to play a more prominent security role.

The historic visit of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida to the Philippines marks a turning point in bilateral relations.

From Japan's first customer of Overseas Security Assistance (OSA) to formalizing negotiations for a Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), the meeting between Marcos Jr. and Kishida has heralded a 'golden era' in the Philippines-Japan strategic partnership, which has the potential for greater engagement.

Similarly, the bilateral partnership between the Philippines and India has seen progress as Manila is now willingly including India in its strategy.



बढ़ते द्विपक्षीय संबंधों में कुछ मील के पत्थर देखे गए, जिसमें फिलीपीन के विदेश सचिव एनरिक मनालो की नई दिल्ली यात्रा और फिलीपीन और भारतीय तट रक्षकों के बीच एक समझौता ज्ञापन (MoU) पर हस्ताक्षर शामिल है।

जो दोनों देशों को अपनी खुफिया जानकारी साझा करने और समुद्री डोमेन जागरूकता में सुधार करने की अनुमति देगा।

Recently, India has also offered seven indigenously manufactured helicopters to the Philippine Coast Guard on the basis of soft loan agreement with extended payment terms.

The agreement comes soon after the delivery of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile to the Southeast Asian country later this year.

Thus, Japan and India's strong engagement in Southeast Asia serves the benefit of countries like the Philippines in reducing their sensitivity to China's growing economic clout and growing power capabilities.

South Asian countries need to have defense strategies for friendly relations. Especially when competition between USA and China is increasing.

According to the 2023 Survey of Southeast Asian Nations, Japan and India are among the top two choices of Southeast Asian countries for Indo-Pacific strategic partners. Therefore, contemporary structural conditions make it difficult for Japan and India to expand their capabilities for the Indo-Pacific. Serves as an opportunity to implement shared understanding.

The global partnership is best defined through the India-Japan special strategic and strong ties shared between them.

From a security perspective, New Delhi and Tokyo continue to engage on various platforms, from regular bilateral military exercises and two-plus-two meetings to multilateral frameworks such as the Quad and G20.

Both countries share a common threat perception, including the threat of an increasingly assertive and disruptive China. Beyond defense cooperation, New Delhi and Tokyo have also begun work on third-country cooperation models in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

In 2017, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe welcomed collaborative efforts to establish an industrial growth and development network in Asia and Africa, creating the Asia Africa Growth Corridor (AAGC).

While the project ultimately slowed down due to geopolitical unrest and economic difficulties triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic, both countries have recently explored new third-country cooperation models across the region.

These include the emerging trilateral partnership between India, Japan and Bangladesh and a similar framework between India, Japan and Sri Lanka.

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