Daily Mains Practice Question 04-07-2026

GS Paper II - International Relations

Japan is rapidly expanding its strategic footprint in Asia. In light of this, analyse how the deepening defence and economic ties between India and Japan can ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific region. ***(15 Marks, 250 Words)***

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Answer

Introduction:

The India–Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership has emerged as a cornerstone of the Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) vision. Following the Japanese Prime Minister's visit to India, both countries unveiled a new Economic Partnership Framework and signed a military hardware co-development pact, marking a new phase in bilateral cooperation.

Main Body

How India–Japan ties can ensure Indo-Pacific stability?

- **Strengthening defence cooperation** – Military hardware co-development & Japan's relaxation of post-war arms export restrictions make the partnership go beyond joint exercises to defence industrial collaboration.
- **Enhancing economic security** – The Economic Partnership Framework focuses heavily on supply chain resilience for critical materials, energy security, creation of economic infrastructure and digital and AI infrastructure.
- **Countering regional strategic challenges** – By promoting a rules-based maritime order and freedom of navigation & reinforced the shared vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) rooted in democracy, rule of law, and sovereignty.
- **Supply chain & technology resilience** – By institutionalising the Supply Chain Resilience Initiative (SCRI), it combines India's manufacturing and digital talent with Japan's advanced technology and capital to reduce global dependence.
- **Infrastructure & regional connectivity** – By integrating India's connectivity initiatives with Japanese finance and technology & providing transparent and sustainable infrastructure alternatives to the BRI across South Asia, East Africa, and the Pacific Islands.

What are the challenges faced by both countries?

- China's growing strategic assertiveness and economic coercion.
- The slow growth of defence industrial collaboration.
- Evolving regional geopolitical uncertainties and security dynamics.
- There is a slowdown in the implementation of economic and technology agreements.

What are the measures that need to be taken?

- Operationalise the defence co-development pact through joint manufacturing under Make in India.
- Expanding the cooperation in AI, semiconductors, cyber security, and critical minerals.
- Strengthening the coordination through the Quad and ASEAN-led mechanisms.
- Deepening maritime-related awareness and logistics cooperation to secure Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs).

Conclusion:

India and Japan are natural strategic partners, and the expansion of defence and economic cooperation contributes significantly to a free, open, inclusive, and rules-based Indo-Pacific. By combining India's strategic location & growing capabilities with Japan's technological & financial strengths, the partnership can emerge as a key pillar of regional stability, sustainable development, and collective security.

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