

Japan-India Joint Press Statement

On 20 August 2026, H.E. Mr. Shinjiro Koizumi, Minister of Defense of Japan, and H.E. Mr. Rajnath Singh, Minister of Defence of the Republic of India, held a Japan-India Defence Ministers' Meeting in New Delhi.

The two Ministers welcomed the steady strengthening of defence cooperation, including cooperation among the respective Ministries and the Services of the two countries that share strategic perspectives, under the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership", which constitutes one of the pillars for peace, stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

Recalling the Japan-India Joint Statement issued by the leaders of the two countries in July 2026, the two Ministers affirmed their commitment, under their leadership, to further deepen defence cooperation to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The two Ministers concurred on the importance of sharing assessments of the regional and international security environment between the two countries at a time of heightened global tensions. They expressed their strong opposition to any unilateral actions that impede freedom and safety of navigation and overflight, as well as to any attempts to change the status-quo by force or coercion.

The two Ministers concurred on deepening operational cooperation in the field of maritime security in a practical and effective manner. They accordingly affirmed their commitment to strengthening Maritime Security Cooperation and signed the Memorandum of Arrangement on Maritime Security Cooperation between the Ministry of Defense of Japan and Ministry of Defence of India.

The Memorandum provides a framework for further advancing cooperation between the two countries in the field of maritime security. Specifically, it includes the strengthening of cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy, including information sharing in the field of Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), as well as enhanced cooperation in areas such as Search and Rescue (SAR) and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

The two Ministers affirmed that they would strengthen coordination between both sides for the protection of Sea Lines of Communications through mutual visits by naval ships and units, joint exercises, personnel and Subject Matter Expert (SME) exchanges and logistical support including use of ports, maintenance and repair facilities. Such cooperation is vital not only to Japan and India, but also to the region and the international community.

The two Ministers concurred on moving swiftly to realize concrete maritime security cooperation that serves the strategic and operational needs. They further shared the view that both sides should maximize synergies to enhance mine countermeasures capabilities and explore the possibility of joint development in naval shipbuilding and design by leveraging Japan's technological expertise and India's production capabilities in accordance with their respective relevant policies. They further shared the view that both sides should leverage each other's strengths in the field of defense shipbuilding and related areas, and deepen discussions on Japan's use of India's production capabilities under the framework of "Make in India". The Two Ministers also concurred on progressing reciprocal provision of ship repair facilities including the conclusion of ship repair arrangement in near future.

The two Ministers welcomed the steady expansion and deepening of bilateral exercises conducted by Japan and India, including the Japan-India Army exercise 'Dharma Guardian' and the Japan-India Maritime Exercise "JAIMEX". They particularly welcomed the steady progress in coordination for the Japan-India Air Force exercise "Veer Guardian 26", scheduled to be held this year, under which Japan Air Self-Defence Force fighter aircraft will, for the first time, visit India and participate in the exercise. The two Ministers concurred on further deepening cooperation in bilateral exercises through enhanced complexities, integration of unmanned systems and pursue joint exercises at short notice, whenever the opportunities arise.

With a view to further advancing cooperation among the Services of the two countries, the two Ministers concurred on promoting exchanges between their respective Special Operations Forces and pursuing cooperation with India's integrated theatre commands following their establishment.

Defence Minister Shri Rajnath Singh welcomed Japan's recent review of its framework for the transfer of defence equipment and technology, and expressed his expectation that Japan would further contribute to peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and the wider world. He particularly expressed his expectations for the further deepening of the defence and technology partnership between the two countries.

The two Ministers shared the view that the project concerning the shipborne UNICORN integrated communications antenna system, as the first defence equipment transfer project between the two countries, represents a symbol of the deepening cooperation between Japan and India in the transfer of defence equipment and technology. Under the leadership of two Ministers, they affirmed their commitment to working together towards the early realization of the project.

With a view to materializing other projects in the field of defence equipment and technology, they further concurred on advancing discussions among the respective Services of the two countries concerning operational requirements. The two Ministers also affirmed their commitment to deepening the defence R&D cooperation between DRDO & ATLA in the field of state-of-the-art defence technologies. Both Ministers also confirmed their intention to convene a Defence Industry Forum.

The two Ministers welcomed the first trilateral naval PASSEX exercise involving Japan, India and Indonesia, which was conducted in February this year. With a view to taking a comprehensive perspective of the Indo-Pacific and contributing jointly to peace and stability in the region and the world, they concurred on further deepening cooperation with third countries, through high level exchanges, exercises and other relevant initiatives.

The two Ministers concurred on further promoting cooperation through the Indo-Pacific Logistics Network (IPLN) to support partner countries in the event of a natural disaster, through transporting of personnel and supplies. They welcomed that second tabletop exercise of the IPLN is scheduled to be held at the Japan Ministry of Defense in September this year.

Recalling the guidance set forth in the Japan-India Joint Statement issued by the leaders of the two countries in July 2026, the two Ministers concurred on accelerating discussions towards convening the Fourth Japan-India Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") in Tokyo in this year.

The two Ministers further concurred that Japan and India will hold consultations, when necessary, to ensure the security of both countries and peace and stability in the region.

The two Ministers concurred on establishing a Working Group, headed at the Director-General/ Joint Secretary level to advance cooperation in an integrated manner across the operational, intelligence, equipment, technology and industrial domains, while fully respecting each country's respective policies and sovereign choices. The Working Group will provide overall coordination for the directions of cooperation concurred upon by the two Ministers, maximize synergies among the various areas of cooperation, and accelerate their implementation.

Prior to the meeting, Defense Minister KOIZUMI paid homage to India's fallen heroes by laying a wreath at the National War Memorial in New Delhi and he was received with ceremonial Tri-Service Guard of Honour. Defense Minister KOIZUMI also visited the Western Naval Command (WNC) at Mumbai and Indian Naval Ship Chennai.