No. 160 August 2026

RIS Policy Brief

India–Japan Science, Technology and Innovation Cooperation: From Scientific Collaboration to Strategic Technology Partnership

Sanjeev K. Varshney, Amit Kumar, Sneha Sinha and Alaknanda Mishra

1. Introduction

This policy brief traces the evolution of India-Japan science, technology and innovation (STI) cooperation from the establishment of diplomatic relations between two countries in 1952 to the outcomes of the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit in 2026. It highlights that bilateral scientific cooperation began much before the signing of the 1985 Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology. In its early days, cooperation was largely embedded within broader frameworks of cultural diplomacy, technical assistance and Japan's Official Development Assistance. The 1985 Agreement marked an important turning point by providing the first dedicated institutional framework for bilateral science and technology cooperation through the establishment of the Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation. Over time, this framework enabled scientific collaboration to become more structured and sustained. Between 2005 and 2014, the relationship underwent a significant transformation as science and technology moved beyond research collaboration to become important drivers of innovation, industrial competitiveness

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S. K. Varshney Amit Kumar Sneha Sinha Alaknanda Mishra

This Policy Brief has been prepared by Dr. S. K. Varshney, Science Consultant, RIS and Former Adviser and Head, International Cooperation, Department of Science and Technology, Dr. Amit Kumar, Assistant Professor, RIS., Dr. Sneha Sinha, Consultant, RIS and Ms. Alaknanda Mishra, Research Assistant, RIS. The authors are grateful to Professor Sachin Kumar Sharma, Director General, RIS, for providing support to prepare this Policy Brief. Views expressed are personal. Usual disclaimers apply.

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Centre for Maritime Economy and Connectivity
समुद्री अर्थव्यवस्था व संयोजन केंद्र

FITM
Forum on Indian Traditional Medicine

and strategic cooperation, culminating in the 2014 Tokyo Declaration, which expanded bilateral cooperation into frontier technologies, innovation ecosystems and digital transformation.

The partnership continued to deepen between 2022 and 2024 through the initiatives such as the five-year investment plan focusing on artificial intelligence, quantum communication and resilient supply chains, alongside renewed cooperation in marine and earth science cooperation and the launch of the Clean Energy Partnership. These developments reached a new milestone in 2025-2026, with the declaration of the India-Japan Year of Science, Technology and Innovation Exchange, commemorating four decades of bilateral S&T cooperation. The period also witnessed the visit of Japanese Prime Minister H.E. Ms. Takaichi Sanae to India for the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit (1-2 July 2026), during which both countries adopted the Joint Statement on Cooperation in Artificial Intelligence and the Joint Declaration on Economic Security.

Alongside these government-led initiatives, the policy brief also traces the growing contribution of industry to bilateral science and technology cooperation. Japanese companies such as Suzuki, Daikin and Dai Nippon Printing have established research and development centres in India, and Japanese Global Capability Centres have expanded their engineering and innovation presence across the country. These industry-led initiatives complement and reinforce the cooperation and further strengthen strategic technology partnership between India and Japan. It concludes that India-Japan STI cooperation has evolved from a research-focused partnership into a comprehensive strategic technology partnership. Today, science, technology, and innovation form a central pillar of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership, providing a strong foundation for co-development, co-innovation and deeper collaboration across the Indo-Pacific and the Global South.

2. Foundations of India-Japan Science Cooperation

India and Japan share long-standing spiritual, cultural and civilisational ties[1] that form the foundation of their bilateral relationship. Formal diplomatic relations began with the signing of the Treaty of Peace in 1952, which established a framework for cooperation and promoted mutual welfare. This agreement paved the way for subsequent cooperation in areas such as trade, maritime, aviation and commerce.[2] The Agreement on Air Services further strengthened connectivity between the two countries.[3] During this period, science and technology did not emerge as a separate pillar of bilateral relations. Instead, it was closely linked within the broader framework of cultural diplomacy, economic cooperation and development assistance. The 1956 Agreement for the Promotion of Cultural Relations incorporated scientific cooperation within broader cultural and educational exchanges. It encouraged the exchange of scholars, students, and members of scientific institutions, supported training in scientific, technical and industrial institutions. The agreement also established Japanese-Indian Mixed Commissions to oversee

[1] India-Japan Bilateral Brief, Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan.https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/MTE

[2] Treaty of Peace Between the Governments of India and Japan (1952). Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/LegalTreatiesDoc/JP52B1245.pdf

[3] Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between Japan and India (1955). World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19551126.T1E.html

[4] Agreement on Cultural Cooperation between Japan and India: Exchange of Notes (1956). World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19561029.T1E.html

cooperation in education, culture, and scientific exchange.[4] Similarly, the 1958 Agreement on Commerce reaffirmed the two countries' commitment to promote the exchange and application of scientific and technical knowledge in support of economic development and improved living standards.[5]

These early agreements highlight that science and technology was recognised as key drivers of economic growth, human resource development, and cultural exchange nearly three decades before the two countries signed a dedicated bilateral Science and Technology agreement. Rather than functioning independently, scientific cooperation formed a part of the broader development partnership between the two countries. Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA), initiated in 1958 further strengthened this developmental approach. Beyond providing concessional finance, Japan's ODA placed considerable emphasis on technical cooperation through expert missions, engineering support, training programmes, and exchanges of technical personnel, and institutional capacity building. These initiatives made an important contribution to India's industrialisation and development of its scientific capacity-building.[6]

This developmental orientation was further reflected in several sector-specific agreements. These included the establishment of the Prototype Production and Training Centre for Small Scale Industries in 1960,[7] the Marine Products Processing Training Centre[8] in 1962, and the Agricultural Demonstration Centre[9] later in the same year. These initiatives facilitated the deployment of Japanese technical experts, training of Indian personnel, and the transfer of technical knowledge and skills across industrial and agricultural sectors. India-Japan space cooperation also has its origins in the 1960s following the establishment of the Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launching Station. However, bilateral cooperation in space was formally institutionalised much later through the 2005 arrangement between the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) concerning future cooperation in outer space.[10] Alongside government-led technical cooperation, scientific exchanges between universities, research institutions, and academic organisations also expanded gradually during this period. These early collaborations laid the institutional and intellectual foundations for the more structured and comprehensive scientific partnership that developed in the following decades.

3. Institutionalisation of Bilateral Science and Technology Cooperation

The signing of the Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology in 1985 marked a significant milestone in India-Japan relations by establishing the first dedicated government-to-government framework for science cooperation. Unlike the earlier agreements, which treated science and technology as part of the broader development cooperation, the 1985 Agreement recognised S&T as an independent area of collaboration and acknowledged its growing importance in supporting the social and economic development of both countries. The Agreement laid the foundation for structured cooperation by providing

5 Agreement between Japan and India on Japanese Economic Cooperation (1958). World and Japan Database. https://world-jpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19580204.T1E.html, Yasutomo, D. T. (1995). The New Multilateralism in Japan's Foreign Policy. New York: St. Martin's Press, pp. 22–26, 144.

6 India-Japan Science and Technology Cooperation: Emerging Opportunities and Challenges. Observer Research Foundation (ORF). https://www.orfonline.org/public/uploads/posts/pdf/20230723140616.pdf

7 Agreement between Japan and India on the Establishment of Technical Training Institutes (1960). World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19600125.T1E.html

8 Agreement between Japan and India concerning Technical Cooperation (1962). World and Japan Database. https://world-jpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19620331.T1E.html

9 Exchange of Notes between Japan and India relating to Technical Cooperation (1962). World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19620423.O1E.html

10 India-Japan Relations. Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan. https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI

for exchange of scientific and technical personnel, sharing of scientific information, and implementation of joint research projects and programmes. It also established the Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation as the principal institutional mechanism for overseeing bilateral collaboration. The first meeting of the Joint Committee meeting was held in New Delhi in 1986, after which regular exchanges of scientists, workshops, consultations and collaborative activities were carried out under its framework. Since then, the Committee has continued to review progress, identify emerging areas of cooperation, and provide continuity to the partnership. The implementation of these initiatives has been supported by India's Department of Science and Technology (DST), Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), and the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST).[11]

Bilateral scientific cooperation received further momentum following the visit of Japanese Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki to India in 1990. During the visit, both governments agreed to establish a broader framework for promoting scientific exchanges, with JSPS designated as the implementing agency on the Japanese side. Building on these efforts, the India-Japan Science Council was established in 1992 with the support of DST and JSPS. The Council became the principal platform for scientist-to-scientist engagement, identifying common research priorities and promoting joint research projects, bilateral workshops, researcher exchanges, postdoctoral fellowships, RONPAKU doctoral fellowships and academic seminars. Programmes supported by JSPS, including the HOPE Meetings, also created opportunities for young Indian researchers and doctoral scholars to interact with leading international scientists, contributing to strengthen long-term scientific networks between the two countries.[12] As a result, bilateral cooperation gradually evolved beyond researcher exchanges into sustained scientific collaboration based on regular dialogue, jointly identified research priorities and long-term institutional support.[13] Although the late 1990s witnessed temporary challenges, scientific contacts and academic exchanges continued across several disciplines, demonstrating the resilience of institutional mechanisms for science and technology cooperation.[14] By the beginning of the 2000s, India and Japan had developed a dense institutional network connecting governments, funding agencies, research councils, and universities. Bilateral cooperation had moved from technical assistance towards collaborative research, creating the institutional foundation for the more strategic technology partnership in the following years.

4. From Development Cooperation to Strategic Partnership

The period between 2005 and 2014 marked a major turning point in India-Japan science and technology cooperation. During these years, S&T gradually evolved from being primarily an instrument of development cooperation into an important driver of innovation, industrial competitiveness and the broader strategic partnership between

[11] Tokyo Declaration for the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership (2014). Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/LegalTreaties-Doc/JP14B2808.pdf

[12] India-Japan Relations. Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan. https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI

[13] Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. (2020). Japan–India Science Council: 26 Years of Bilateral Scientific Cooperation. Tokyo: Japan Society for the Promotion of Science. https://www.jsps.go.jp/file/storage/e-publications/data/Japan-India_sciencecouncil.pdf

[14] Japan-India Partnership in the Twenty-first Century. World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/19980513.S1E.html

the two countries. An important step in this direction came during Japanese Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori's visit to India in August 2000. The visit led to the establishment of the Global Partnership and recognised complementary strengths of India's software capabilities and Japan's advanced manufacturing sector. It also launched the Japan-India IT Promotion and Cooperation Initiative, placing information technology at the centre of efforts to revitalise bilateral relations.[15] This marked a shift in the role of science and technology, particularly ICT, from development-oriented cooperation to a strategic area of collaboration.

The Japan-India Joint Declaration of 2001 further strengthened the Global Partnership by recognising the strong complementarities between the two countries in ICT. It encouraged collaboration between businesses, expanded exchanges of professionals, and promoted closer government dialogue in the IT sector. The Declaration also reaffirmed the commitment of both countries to strengthen cooperation in culture, education, science, and technology, firmly elevating S&T, particularly ICT as an important pillar of the renewed partnership.[16]

The momentum continued with the Joint Statement, Japan-India Partnership in a New Asian Era, which identified science technology as one of the key areas of interest within the eight-fold key initiatives for strengthening the India-Japan Global Partnership.[17] Aound the same time, the revival of the Seventh Joint Committee on Science and Technology reinforced institutional mechanisms for bilateral cooperation. A significant milestone was reached in 2006 when India and Japan elevated their relationship to a Strategic and Global Partnership. The joint statement explicitly recognised that cooperation in science and technology constituted a key element of the strategic partnership. It also approved joint research and development programmes in nanotechnology, life sciences and information and communication technology. Institutional collaboration expanded further through partnerships involving the Department of Science and Technology (DST), the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST), RIKEN, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), the National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA). These collaborations included mobility-based joint research programmes in materials science and life sciences, strengthening scientific exchanges between leading research institutions in both countries.[18]

At the same time, cooperation expanded into frontier areas such as space science, deep-sea drilling, and the ITER fusion project. Bilateral collaboration in advanced scientific infrastructure also progressed through the Indian Beamline at KEK in Tsukuba, which enabled Indian researchers to undertake advanced synchrotron-based materials research. The Beamline was subsequently extended through successive phases, reflecting its continued scientific importance. Disaster management also emerged as an increasingly important dimension of space cooperation during this period.[19]

[15] Japan-India Global Partnership in the 21st Century. World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/20000822.S1E.html

[16] Japan-India Joint Declaration. World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/20011210.D1E.html

[17] Japan-India Partnership in the New Asian Era: Strategic Orientation of Japan–India Global Partnership. World and Japan Database. https://worldjpn.net/documents/texts/JPSA/20050429.D1E.html

[18] India-Japan Relations. Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan. https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI

[19] Joint Statement Towards India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/6368/Joint+Statement+Towards+IndiaJapan+Strategic+and+Global+Partnership

The growing recognition of science and technology as a strategic component of bilateral relations reflected a broader shift. Scientific collaboration was no longer viewed simply as academic or research cooperation but increasingly as a means of advancing strategic, industrial, and technological objectives shared by both countries.

The 2008 Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation further broadened the scope of bilateral scientific and technological collaboration by bringing science and technology into the security domain. Cooperation in tsunami disaster mapping, satellite applications, disaster preparedness, knowledge sharing, and space-based technologies demonstrated how scientific capabilities could contribute to addressing regional security concerns and humanitarian challenges.[20] These commitments were further operationalised through the 2009 Action Plan to Advance Security Cooperation. The Action Plan promoted collaboration under initiatives such as Sentinel Asia, sharing of disaster-related information, preparation of the Tsunami Disaster Map of India, capacity-building workshops on water-related disaster management, exchange of experiences in landslide prevention, and institutional cooperation through the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre. Shaped by the lessons of the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami and the Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015), these initiatives highlighted the growing importance of international cooperation in strengthening disaster resilience.[21] They also reflected the complementary strengths of India and Japan in disaster-related sciences, combining Japan's internationally recognised expertise in earthquake engineering, tsunami preparedness, early warning systems, and disaster-resilient infrastructure with India's capabilities in satellite applications, Earth observation, and disaster management.

The 2010 Vision for India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership further broadened bilateral cooperation beyond joint research in nanotechnology, ICT, and life sciences. New areas of collaboration included Green Innovation, Life Innovation, ICT regulatory cooperation, higher education partnerships, renewable and nuclear energy, rare earths and rare metals, high-technology trade, and the Information Network for Natural Disaster Mitigation and Recovery under the Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS). These developments reflected the growing integration of scientific cooperation with innovation, industrial competitiveness, sustainable development, and broader strategic objectives.[22]

The India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), signed in 2011, further reinforced this trend by recognising science and technology as an important pillar of economic cooperation. Through its dedicated cooperation chapter, CEPA promoted collaboration in areas such as energy, environmental protection, human resource development, capacity building, and intellectual property, while giving particular emphasis to information and communication technology.[23] Although bilateral cooperation continued to focus

[20] Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India (2008). Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/Portal/LegalTreaties-Doc/JP08B0366.pdf

[21] United Nations, Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, 18–22 January 2005. https://www.unisdr.org/2005/wcdr/intergover/official-doc/L-docs/Hyogo-framework-for-action-english.pdf

[22] Joint Statement: Vision for India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership in the Next Decade. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases?dtl/836/Joint+Statement+Vision+for+India Japan+Strategic+and+Global+Partnership+in+the+Next+Decade

[23] Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) between Japan and the Republic of India. Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan. https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/india/epa201102/pdfs/ijcepa_ba_e.pdf

on traditional areas such as basic research, biotechnology, ICT, energy, and researcher exchanges under the 1985 S&T Agreement, it had clearly evolved into a much broader strategic partnership by the end of this period.

5. Expanding Technology Partnership

The elevation of India–Japan relations to a Special Strategic and Global Partnership in 2014 marked the beginning of a new phase in bilateral science and technology cooperation. The Tokyo Declaration broadened the scope of collaboration beyond conventional scientific research to include frontier technologies, innovation ecosystems, digital transformation, higher education, industrial technology, health, nuclear energy, and human resource development. In doing so, it laid the foundation for a more comprehensive technology partnership centred on emerging and critical technologies.[24]

Building on this momentum, the 2015 Joint Statement, India and Japan Vision 2025, shifted the focus from broad strategic commitments to their practical implementation. It introduced several institutional mechanisms, including joint research laboratories, ICT research centres, collaborative fellowship programmes, technology transfer initiatives, and expanded researcher mobility. Human resource development also received greater attention through programmes such as the Sakura Science Exchange Programme, which enabled Indian school and university students, researchers, and faculty members to undertake short-term academic visits to Japanese institutions.[25] The Vision also linked science and technology more closely with manufacturing, infrastructure development, clean energy, higher education, disaster risk reduction, and skill development.[26] The 2016 Joint Statement translated many of these commitments into concrete collaborative initiatives. Institutional cooperation was strengthened through agreements between ISRO and JAXA, renewed collaboration between India's Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) and the Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC), the Manufacturing Skill Transfer Promotion Programme, the establishment of Japan-India Institutes for Manufacturing (JIMs), the High-Speed Rail technology transfer framework, and continued engagement through the Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation. During the same period, cooperation in digital technologies expanded considerably. Progress was made through the Joint Working Group on Information Technology and Electronics and the Japan-India IoT Investment Initiative, developed in collaboration with JETRO. Bilateral engagement also deepened across space technology, marine and earth sciences, biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, clean energy, civil nuclear energy, and human resource development, reflecting the increasingly diverse nature of the partnership.[27]

The 2017 Joint Statement further expanded the technology agenda by introducing new areas of collaboration involving startups, industry, and space. Initiatives such as the India-Japan Startup Hub, the ISRO-JAXA Joint Working Group, and the NASSCOM-ITAC partnership encouraged greater interaction between governments,

[24] Tokyo Declaration for India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/23965/Tokyo+Declaration+for+India++Japan+Special+Strategic+and+Global+Partnership

[25] India-Japan Relations. Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan. https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI

[26] Joint Statement on India and Japan Vision 2025: Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/26176/Joint_Statement_on_India_and_Japan_Vision_2025_Special_Strategic_and_Global_Partnership_Working_Together_for_Peace_and_Prosperity_of_the_IndoPacific_R

[27] India-Japan Joint Statement during the Visit of the Prime Minister to Japan. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/27599/IndiaJapan+Joint+Statement+during+the+visit+of+Prime+Minister+to+Japan

[28] India-Japan Joint Statement during the Visit of the Prime Minister of Japan to India (14 September 2017). Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/28946/IndiaJapan+Joint+Statement+during+visit+of+Prime+Minister+of+Japan+to+India+September+14+2017

industry, startups, and research institutions. Cooperation also broadened across digital technologies, advanced manufacturing, biomedical sciences, clean energy, and disaster resilience.[28] A major development during this period was the launch of the India-Japan Digital Partnership, which significantly expanded bilateral cooperation in emerging technologies. The partnership promoted collaboration in artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things (IoT), cybersecurity, electronics manufacturing, space technologies, and industry-academia linkages. It also sought to strengthen innovation ecosystems through initiatives such as the India-Japan Startup Hub, while creating synergies with India's flagship programmes, including Digital India, Start-up India, and the Smart Cities Mission and Japan's Society 5.0 vision.[29] India also became an active participant in Japan's annual Science and Technology in Society (STS) Forum in Kyoto. The Forum emerged as an important platform where governments, industry leaders, researchers, and academics discussed global challenges related to science, technology, and innovation, providing additional opportunities to strengthen bilateral policy dialogue.[30]

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced a new dimension to India–Japan science and technology cooperation by bringing greater attention to health security and resilience. Bilateral collaboration expanded in areas such as medical research, pharmaceutical standards, regulatory cooperation, digital health, and traditional medicine. The 10th India-Japan Joint Committee on Science and Technology continued to support collaborative research through the India-Japan Cooperative Science Programme, while also incorporating research on preventive technologies, artificial intelligence applications, and diagnostic testing.[31] The 2022 Joint Statement marked another important transition by moving beyond traditional scientific cooperation towards a broader strategic technology partnership. It launched a five-year investment plan focusing on digital transformation, artificial intelligence, IoT, cybersecurity, 5G, Open RAN, quantum communication, resilient supply chains, and space cooperation.

At the same time, both countries reaffirmed their commitment to institutional cooperation under the Quad's agenda on critical and emerging technologies. Cooperation in marine and earth sciences also advanced with the renewal of the Memorandum of Cooperation between MoES and JAMSTEC in 2023. The renewed agreement expanded collaboration into new areas such as climate variability modelling, marine plastics, and glacial hydrology, reflecting shared concerns about environmental sustainability and climate resilience.[32]

Marking the 75th anniversary of diplomatic relations, India and Japan also launched the India-Japan Clean Energy Partnership (CEP). The partnership broadened cooperation in green hydrogen, renewable energy, energy storage, carbon recycling, and decarbonisation technologies, reinforcing the growing emphasis on clean energy, sustainability, and post-pandemic resilience.[33] Japan's decision to join the International Solar Alliance further strengthened opportunities for

[29] India-Japan Vision Statement. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/30543/IndiaJapan_Vision_Stateme

[30] India-Japan Relations. Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan. https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI ,

[31] Japan-India Relations. Embassy of Japan in India. https://www.in.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/11_000001_00050.html

[32] India-Japan Relations. Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan. https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI

[33] India-Japan Summit Joint Statement: Partnership for a Peaceful, Stable and Prosperous Post-COVID World. Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/34991/IndiaJapan+Summit+Joint+Statement+Partnership+for+a+Peaceful+Stable+and+Prosperous+PostCOVID+World

collaboration in solar energy, energy storage technologies, and the global clean energy transition.

Beyond bilateral initiatives, India and Japan continued to cooperate under the United Nations Technology Facilitation Mechanism (TFM)and through the joint project on Science, Technology and Innovation Roadmaps for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (STI for SDGs), with India along with other five countries serving as a pilot country and Japan acting as a key partner.[34]

Against the backdrop of Japan's G7 Presidency and India's G20 Presidency, both countries further expanded cooperation in semiconductors, critical and emerging technologies, digital public infrastructure, startups, quantum technologies, and resilient supply chains. These initiatives reflected increasing coordination on global technology governance, innovation policy, and strategic technology development. The growing strategic importance of technology cooperation was further highlighted during the 2024 India-Japan 2+2 Ministerial Meeting. The meeting reinforced technology as a key pillar of economic and strategic security by promoting closer cooperation in cybersecurity, outer space, strategic trade, defence technologies, and other emerging technologies, while also strengthening coordination in the Indo-Pacific and through the Quad framework.[35] By the end of this period, India-Japan cooperation had clearly moved beyond traditional scientific exchanges. Science, technology, and innovation had become central to the broader strategic partnership, supporting not only research and innovation but also economic resilience, digital transformation, sustainable development, and regional security.

6. India-Japan Year of Science, Technology and Innovation Exchange

The 15th India-Japan Annual Summit (2025) marked an important milestone in bilateral relations by declaring 2025 as the India-Japan Year of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) Exchange. The initiative commemorated 40 years of bilateral science and technology cooperation and reinforced the growing importance of science, technology and innovation within the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. The declaration reflected a renewed commitment to strengthening scientific cooperation through greater researcher mobility, institutional partnerships, university collaborations, industry-academia linkages, innovation ecosystems, and youth exchanges. Existing initiatives such as the LOTUS Internship Programme and the Sakura Science Exchange Programme were recognised as important mechanisms for promoting researcher mobility, strengthening academic cooperation, and building long-term scientific networks between the two countries. The 2025 Annual Summit further reinforced this transition by recognising science, technology and innovation as central to the future trajectory of bilateral relations, reaffirming support for established mechanisms of scientific cooperation and encouraging deeper collaboration in emerging and critical technologies.

Further, the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation also identified

[34] https://www.indembassy-tokyo.gov.in/eoityo_pages/NjI,

[35] Japan-India Relations. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sw/in/page-ite_000001_00002.html

AI, robotics, quantum technologies, semiconductors, future networks, biotechnology and cybersecurity as priority areas for joint research, academic-industry collaboration and technological cooperation. Collectively, these developments reflected a clear shift from traditional scientific cooperation towards technology-oriented research and innovation partnerships closely linked with economic security, resilient and trusted supply chains and technological competitiveness.

Among the various areas of bilateral S&T cooperation, artificial intelligence emerged as one of the most significant priorities. During the 15th India-Japan Annual Summit, both countries launched the Japan-India AI Cooperation Initiative to promote collaboration in AI research and innovation, industry-academia partnerships, talent development, and the responsible development and deployment of AI. The leaders also welcomed Japan's participation in the India AI Impact Summit, highlighting

Figure 1: Milestones of India-Japan Science, Technology, and Innovation Cooperation

Foundation (1952–1984)
Treaty of Peace (1952) and Cultural Agreement (1956) embed science within Japan's ODA-led technical assistance along with sector-specific training centres (1960s)

Institutionalisation (1985–2004)
1985 S&T Agreement creates the first dedicated framework; Joint Committee (1986) and India-Japan Science Council (1992) built scientist-to-scientist ties.

Strategic Partnership (2005–2013)
ISRO-JAXA Arrangement (2005) and Strategic and Global Partnership (2006) elevate S&T; Security Cooperation (2008) and CEPA (2011) broaden scope.

Expanding Technology Partnership (2014–2021)
Special Strategic and Global Partnership (2014); Vision 2025 (2015) and Digital Partnership (2018) focus on digital technologies, AI, IoT and startup cooperation.
India-Japan Clean Energy Partnership launched and Joint Statement (2022) focus on AI, quantum communication and resilient supply chains; MoES-JAMSTEC renewal.

Strategic Technology Partnership (2025–2026)
Year of STI Exchange and AI Cooperation Initiative Launched (2025); 16th Annual Summit (2026): Joint Statement on AI and the Economic Security Declaration.

Source: Authors' Compilation.

their shared commitment to advancing trustworthy and inclusive AI. Figure 1 captures milestones of India-Japan Science, Technology, and Innovation Cooperation.

Another significant development during the period was the 11th India-Japan Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation meeting on 5 June 2026. The meeting was co-chaired by India's Department of Science Technology (DST) and Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). It reviewed progress under the renewed 2022 Implementation Arrangement and reaffirmed the importance of established bilateral mechanisms, including the DST-Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Cooperative Science Programme and the collaborative initiatives between DST-Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). While these longstanding mechanisms continued to support joint research projects, researcher exchanges, young scientist fellowships, joint laboratories, and scientific workshops, the Committee also broadened the bilateral agenda by identifying several emerging areas of future collaboration. These included quantum science and technology, artificial intelligence (AI), biotechnology, clean energy technologies, disaster risk reduction, geospatial sciences, Earth observation, advanced materials, blue economy research, innovation partnerships, and enhanced research mobility. This momentum culminated at the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit held on 2 July 2026, into the adoption of the Joint Statement on Cooperation in the Field of Artificial Intelligence, establishing a comprehensive framework for cooperation in AI.

The India-Japan Joint Statement on cooperation in AI established a comprehensive framework for cooperation covering AI research, governance, innovation, talent development, capacity building, and trusted AI. It underlined the growing strategic importance of AI within the broader India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.[36]

The strategic orientation of bilateral science and technology cooperation became even more evident during the official visit of the Prime Minister of Japan, H.E. Ms Takaichi Sanae, to India from 1-3 July 2026 for the 16th India-Japan Annual Summit. The Summit placed technology cooperation at the centre of bilateral relations and further elevated AI collaboration into a strategic research and development partnership. Building on the Japan-India AI Cooperation Initiative and the first India-Japan AI Strategic Dialogue held in April 2026, the Joint Statement established a roadmap for cooperation across the AI technology stack, encompassing research and innovation, governance, capacity building, talent development, trusted and responsible AI, resilient AI supply chains, and collaboration among governments, academia, research institutions and industry.[37]

Complementing the AI partnership, the two countries also adopted the India-Japan Joint Declaration on Economic Security, further broadening the scope of bilateral science and technology cooperation by integrating it more closely with industrial policy, technology resilience, and economic security. The Declaration promotes

[36] List of Outcomes: Prime Minister's Visit to Japan. Prime Minister's Office, Government of India. https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/list-of-outcomes-pms-visit-to-japan/

[37] India-Japan Joint Statement on Cooperation in the Field of Artificial Intelligence (AI). Prime Minister's Office, Government of India. https://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/india-japan-joint-statement-on-cooperation-in-the-field-of-artificial-intelligence-ai/

[38] Cabinet Approves Memorandum of Cooperation between India and Japan on AI. Press Information Bureau, Government of India. https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID2280591&lang2

project-based cooperation in priority sectors, including semiconductors, critical minerals, information and communication technologies (including AI), clean energy, and pharmaceuticals, while strengthening resilient and trusted supply chains. These initiatives demonstrate how science, technology and innovation have increasingly become integrated to the broader framework of economic security and strategic resilience.[38]

The Summit also witnessed the conclusion of several institutional partnerships involving leading research organisations, universities and technology institutions, including collaborations among RIKEN, IIT Bombay, the BharatGen Technology Foundation, the National Institute of Informatics (Japan), SarvamAI, and the National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) to advance AI research, digital innovation, talent development and institutional cooperation. These partnerships aim to advance AI research, digital innovation, talent development, and long-term institutional cooperation. Alongside these new initiatives, both countries reaffirmed their commitment to traditional scientific cooperation by welcoming continued cooperation on frontier scientific research programmes such as the LUPEX (Lunar Polar Exploration) Mission between ISRO and JAXA and the extension of the Indian Beamline at KEK, Tsukuba. This demonstrated that while bilateral cooperation is increasingly driven by emerging technologies, longstanding scientific collaborations continue to provide the foundation of the broader strategic technology partnership.[39]

7. Corporate-Led Investments and R&D Centres

In recent years, India–Japan science, technology and innovation (STI) cooperation has extended beyond government-led initiatives to include a growing role for industry. Japanese companies are increasingly establishing Global Development Centres (GDCs), Global Capability Centres (GCCs) and corporate R&D facilities in India. This reflects India's emergence as an important global innovation hub, reinforcing bilateral cooperation through co-development, advanced engineering and technology partnerships. The details are included in Table 1.

According to Deloitte India's 2026 report titled 'India's Strategic GCC play for Japanese Enterprises', with over 100 centres already established, Japan has emerged as the largest contributor to India's GCC ecosystem in the Asia Pacific (APAC) region. These centres are rapidly evolving into strategic hubs for engineering, digital transformation and product innovation, spanning areas such as AI, embedded systems, cloud, advanced analytics and digital manufacturing. Japanese GCCs are moving beyond being support functions into high-value areas such as product R&D, AI, engineering, cloud, fintech and digital manufacturing. Sector mix is led by technology at 20 percent, followed by industrials at 15 percent and automotive and healthcare at 11 percent each. In the technology sector, electronics remains a core pillar. Japanese firms are aligning closely with India's expanding ecosystem

[39] Cabinet Approves India-Japan Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation. Press Information Bureau, Government of India. https://www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2280587&lang

Table 1: Japanese Private Sector Investments in India

Sector	Japanese Company	Indian Company/ Entity	Investment Nature and Scope
Semiconductors	Renesas Electronics	CG Power	Renesas Electronics has invested in CG Power's OSAT project in Sanand, Gujarat, supporting the start of mass production in 2026. The project involves a large-scale OSAT plant with significant planned investment and high-volume production capacity for automotive, industrial and advanced applications.
	Tokyo Electron (TEL)	Tata Electronics	Tokyo Electron (TEL) and Tata Electronics have launched a strategic partnership to build a semiconductor ecosystem India. TEL plans to open an office in Dholera Industrial Park, Gujarat, to support Tata Electronics' new front-end fabrication.
	Fujifilm India	Government of Gujarat	Fujifilm India has announced its intention to invest in a project to manufacture semiconductor materials at the Dholera Industrial Park in the state of Gujarat, with operations envisaged to commence around 2028. In June 2026, Fujifilm India and the Government of Gujarat entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding this project.
	Mizuho Bank	Government of Gujarat	Mizuho Bank, commissioned by METI, designed a "master plan" to foster the Japan-India semiconductor industry. In October 2025, Mizuho Bank and the Government of Gujarat signed a Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) regarding support for semiconductor investment to assist Japanese semiconductor-related companies and others in expanding into the state of Gujarat.
	ROHM	Tata Electronics	In December 2025, Rohm signed an MoU with Tata Electronics to develop power semiconductor manufacturing by leveraging its back-end capabilities
	ROHM	Suchi Semicon	In March 2026, Rohm signed an MoU with Suchi Semicon to explore back-end outsourcing and mass production of power semiconductors and ICs.
	Minebea Mitsumi	Government of Tamil Nadu	The company has signed a MoU with the Government of Tamil Nadu to cooperate toward realizing investments for establishing manufacturing and R&D facilities for high-voltage power semiconductors for railway applications and other electronics components.

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AI and ICT	Rakuten Symphony	Tejas Networks	Rakuten Symphony and Tejas Networks have entered into partnership for the development of Open RAN network solutions. Building on such developments, Rakuten Symphony further announced its plan to expand its integrated operations on artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies in collaboration with Indian telecom operators and other stakeholders.
	Aeterlink Corp.	Softdel Systems Pvt. Ltd.	Aeterlink Corp. and Softdel Systems Pvt. Ltd. have entered into a partnership for the implementation of Physical AI utilizing Aeterlink's wireless power transfer technology.
	Preferred Networks	Sarvam AI	Preferred Networks and Sarvam AI have signed an MoU regarding cooperation in the R&D and deployment of generative AI.
	NEC	Reliance Jio	NEC and Reliance Jio entered into a strategic partnership to collaborate on information and communication technology infrastructure and technology, particularly on 5G technology and Open RAN.
Pharmaceuticals	Eisai	Global Capability Center in Vizag	Eisai produces 80 tons of active pharmaceutical ingredients and 2 billion tablets annually at its Vizag plant in Andhra Pradesh and also operates a research and development hub for pharmaceutical manufacturing. Eisai Co. is working towards establishing a Global Capability Center in Vizag focused on AI-enabled drug development, clinical analytics and digital R&D.
	Takeda Pharmaceutical	Zydus	Takeda Pharmaceutical operates an "innovation hub" that conducts global data analysis and manages a joint venture with local major player Zydus to manufacture active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs) and intermediates.
	Takeda Pharmaceutical	Biological E.	Takeda Pharmaceutical has partnered with Biological E. in biologics and vaccine manufacturing.

Source: Ministry of External Affairs (2026).[40]

to advance product innovation and digitally enabled supply chains. India-based centres are increasingly focused on embedded systems, hardware-software integration and scalable, manufacturing-ready platforms, supported by strong talent across AI, automation, mobility and IT services. Japanese GCCs are also accelerating legacy modernisation and cloud migration, strengthening digital backbones for global operations. At the same time, firms are shifting towards high-value, sustainable segments such as HVAC, smart living and digital energy solutions.[41] This

[40] Ministry of External Affairs (2026). See https://www.mea.gov.in/bilateral-documents?dtl/41396/Fact_Sheet_20_IndiaJapan_Economic_Security_Cooperation

[41] Deloitte https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone1/in/en/docs/industries/gcc/2026/in-gcc-indias-strategic-gcc-play-for-japanese-enterprises-june-2026.pdf

transition is driven by the combination of India's engineering depth and Japan's manufacturing expertise, with ecosystem collaborations playing a key role in co-developing next-generation solutions. These centres are increasingly engaged in high-value activities such as engineering design, artificial intelligence, software development, product engineering and research and development, indicating a clear shift from traditional back-office operations through innovation-driven collaboration. Overall, the emergence of Japanese Global Development Centres, Global Capability Centres, and corporate R&D facilities demonstrate an important shift in India-Japan science and technology cooperation. Bilateral engagement has evolved beyond technology transfer and manufacturing partnerships towards co-development, co-innovation and global product development. This growing industry-led innovation ecosystem complements government-led science diplomacy initiatives and further reinforces science, technology and innovation as a central pillar of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership.

8. Conclusion and Way Forward

India-Japan science and technology cooperation has followed a clear and consistent trajectory since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1952. Beginning from technical assistance embedded within cultural and development cooperation, it gradually evolved into a structured bilateral partnership following the 1985 Agreement on Cooperation in Science and Technology. Since mid-2000s, science, technology and innovation (STI) have increasingly become strategic enablers of innovation, industrial competitiveness, and economic security, with developments of 2025-2026 representing a new and significant phase of evolution. While longstanding institutional mechanisms, such as the Joint Committee on Science and Technology Cooperation, the DST-JSPS Cooperative Science Programme, DST-JST collaboration, researcher exchanges and joint laboratories, continue to provide the stability and continuity to bilateral scientific engagement, recent initiatives demonstrate a much broader vision.

Science, technology, and innovation are now closely linked with economic security, critical and emerging technologies, resilient supply chains, and innovation-led growth. Increasingly, science diplomacy is being leveraged not only to promote research collaboration but also to strengthen trusted technology ecosystems and deepen strategic technological cooperation across the Indo-Pacific. This evolution reflects reflects wider global trends characterised by intensifying technological competition, growing concerns over supply-chain resilience, the strategic importance of critical and emerging technologies, and the convergence of innovation, economic security, and geopolitics. Shared national priorities, particularly India's Viksit Bharat 2047 and Japan's Society 5.0, provide a strong foundation for further expanding bilateral cooperation in these areas.

The future of India-Japan science and technology cooperation will focus on emerging hi-tech sectors like AI, quantum computing, semiconductors, space exploration and clean energy. Both countries

are expanding collaboration in joint research, startup exchanges, and advanced manufacturing to promote resilient, secure, and human-centric technological development.

In artificial intelligence, cooperation could focus on developing human-centric AI ecosystems by combining India's strengths in digital innovation and skilled talent with Japan's expertise in robotics, automation and secure digital governance. In semiconductors and electronics, both countries could strengthen resilient and trusted critical supply-chains supported by investments from Japanese companies such as Renesas in India's semiconductor and electronics manufacturing ecosystems. In space and quantum technologies, cooperation could focus on missions like the Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) and expanded research partnerships in quantum science between their national research institutions. Partnering in green hydrogen and ammonia production, clean energy technologies, and sustainable industrial initaitives to support energy security and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Their collaboration is further reinforced through participation in the Global Biofuel Alliance.

Looking ahead, India and Japan are well positioned to deepen cooperation through greater emphasis on co-development, co-innovation and the practical application of advanced technologies. By combining Japan's strengths in scientific research, advanced manufacturing, earthquake engineering, disaster-resilient infrastructure and early warning systems with India's capabilities in digital public infrastructure, disaster risk governance, and development partnerships, the two countries can expand cooperation in disaster preparedness, resilient infrastructure, and capacity building across the Global South. Closer engagement through the initiatives such as the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) could further strengthen these efforts.

Realising this potential, however, will require sustained efforts across government, academia, industry, startups, and research institutions. Joint research and development, technology commercialisation and industrial collaboration in frontier technologies such as AI, semiconductors, quantum technologies, biotechnology and advanced manufacturing need to continue to deepen support for co-development and co-innovation rather than one-way technology transfer. At the same time, trusted digital infrastructure, resilient supply chains and common technology standards will be essential for responding to emerging geopolitical and economic challenges. The future of India-Japan strategic technology partnership will highly depend on emergence of science, technology and innovation as a durable pillar of the India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. Therefore, strengthening existing institutional mechanisms and fostering new and sustained collaborations among governments, universities, research institutions, startups and industry together with deepening people-to-people ties will effectively contribute to resilient, inclusive and sustainable development not only within the Indo-Pacific but also the Global South.

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RIS
Research and Information System for Developing Countries
विकासशील देशों की अनुसंधान एवं सूचना प्रणाली

RIS specialises in issues related to international economic development, trade, investment and technology. It is envisioned as a forum for fostering effective policy dialogue and capacity-building among developing countries on global and regional economic issues. The focus of the work programme of RIS is to promote South-South Cooperation and collaborate with developing countries in multilateral negotiations in various forums. Through its following centres/forums, RIS promotes policy dialogue and coherence on regional and international economic issues.

The word "DAKSHIN" (**दक्षिण**) is of Sanskrit origin, meaning "South." The Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, inaugurated DAKSHIN – Global South Centre of Excellence in November 2023. The initiative was inspired by the deliberations of Global South leaders during the Voice of the Global South Summits. DAKSHIN stands for Development and Knowledge Sharing Initiative. Hosted at the RIS, DAKSHIN has established linkages with leading think tanks and universities across the Global South and is building a dynamic network of scholars working on Global South issues.

AIC at RIS has been working to strengthen India's strategic partnership with ASEAN in its realisation of the ASEAN Community. AIC at RIS undertakes research, policy advocacy and regular networking activities with relevant organisations and think-tanks in India and ASEAN countries, with the aim of providing policy inputs, up-to-date information, data resources and sustained interaction, for strengthening ASEAN-India Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

CMEC has been established at RIS under the aegis of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPS&W), Government of India, and in collaboration with the Indian Ports Association (IPA). It has been mandated to act as an advisory/technological arm of MoPSW to provide the analytical support on policies and their implementation.

FITM is a joint initiative by the Ministry of Ayush and RIS. It has been established with the objective of undertaking policy research on economy, intellectual property rights (IPRs) trade, sustainability and international cooperation in traditional medicines. FITM provides analytical support to the Ministry of Ayush on policy and strategy responses on emerging national and global developments.

BEF aims to serve as a dedicated platform for fostering dialogue on promoting the concept in the Indian Ocean and other regions. The forum focuses on conducting studies on the potential, prospects and challenges of blue economy; providing regular inputs to practitioners in the government and the private sectors; and promoting advocacy for its smooth adoption in national economic policies.

FIDC, has been engaged in exploring nuances of India's development cooperation programme, keeping in view the wider perspective of South-South Cooperation in the backdrop of international development cooperation scenario. It is a tripartite initiative of the Development Partnership Administration (DPA) of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, academia and civil society organisations.

FISD aims to harness the full potential and synergy between science and technology, diplomacy, foreign policy and development cooperation in order to meet India's development and security needs. It is also engaged in strengthening India's engagement with the international system and on key global issues involving science and technology.

As part of its work programme, RIS has been deeply involved in strengthening economic integration in the South Asia region. In this context, the role of the South Asia Centre for Policy Studies (SACEPS) is very important. SACEPS is a network organisation engaged in addressing regional issues of common concerns in South Asia.

Knowledge generated endogenously among the Southern partners can help in consolidation of stronger common issues at different global policy fora. The purpose of NeST is to provide a global platform for Southern Think-Tanks for collaboratively generating, systematising, consolidating and sharing knowledge on South South Cooperation approaches for international development.

— Policy research to shape the international development agenda —

Core IV-B, Fourth Floor, India Habitat Centre, Lodhi Road, New Delhi-110 003, India.,
Tel. 91-11-24682177-80, Email: dgoffice@ris.org.in, Website: www.ris.org.in

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