News: Ahead of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s visit to India mid-December, India and Japan are going to hold the inaugural meeting of India-Japan Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue (2+2) on Saturday in Delhi.

Prelims and Mains focus: about 2+2 dialogue, Quad grouping an its significance, Indo-Japan relations

About the 2+2 dialogue

- It is held between the defence and foreign ministers of the two countries.

- So far, only India and the US have the 2+2 ministerial mechanism, although India and Australia also have the 2+2 at the official level.

- With this, India has 2+2 mechanism with all the Quad countries.

- India, Australia, US and Japan have met under the rubric of Quadrilateral since 2017 at the official level, and at the foreign ministers’ level in September this year.

- India and the US 2+2 level dialogue is expected to take place on December 18 in Washington DC this year.

Details of the Meeting

- The 2+2 meeting would provide an opportunity for the two sides to review the status of and exchange further views on strengthening defence and security cooperation between India and Japan so as to provide greater depth to the ‘India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership’.

- The two sides will also exchange views on the situation in the Indo-Pacific region and their respective efforts under India’s ‘Act East Policy’ and Japan’s ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific Vision’ for achieving their shared objective of peace, prosperity and progress to
realise a better future for the people of the two countries and the region.

- This meeting is being held after the decision taken by PM Modi and Japan PM Abe during the 13th India-Japan Annual Summit held in Japan in October 2018 to institute a Foreign and Defence Ministerial Dialogue for further deepening bilateral security and defence cooperation.

- While Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will head the Indian delegation for 2+2, the Japanese delegation will be led by Foreign Affairs Minister Toshimitsu Motegi and Minister of Defence Taro Kono.

About the Quad grouping

- Regional coalition known as the ‘Quad’, the quadrilateral formation includes Japan, India, United States and Australia.

- All four nations find a common ground of being the democratic nations and common interests of unhindered maritime trade and security.

- The idea was first mooted by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in 2007. However, the idea couldn’t move ahead with Australia pulling out of it.

Significance:

- Quad is an opportunity for like-minded countries to share notes and collaborate on projects of mutual interest. All four countries share a vision of an open and free Indo-Pacific. Each is involved in development and economic projects as well as in promoting maritime domain awareness and maritime security.

- The Quad grouping is one of the many avenues for interaction among India, Australia, Japan and the US and should not be seen in an exclusive context. Quad should not be seen in any comparative or in an exclusive context.

Indo-Japan relations:
Exchange between Japan and India is said to have begun in the 6th century when Buddhism was introduced to Japan. Indian culture, filtered through Buddhism, has had a great impact on Japanese culture, and this is the source of the Japanese people's sense of closeness to India.

After World War II, in 1949, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru donated an Indian elephant to the Ueno Zoo in Tokyo. This brought a ray of light into the lives of the Japanese people who still had not recovered from defeat in the war. Japan and India signed a peace treaty and established diplomatic relations on 28th April, 1952. This treaty was one of the first peace treaties Japan signed after World War II.

Ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have enjoyed cordial relations. In the post World War II period, India's iron ore helped a great deal Japan's recovery from the devastation. Following Japanese Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi's visit to India in 1957, Japan started providing yen loans to India in 1958, as the first yen loan aid extended by Japanese government.

Recent relations

- Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori's visit to India in August 2000 provided the momentum to strengthen the Japan-India relationship. Mr. Mori and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee decided the establishment of "Global Partnership between Japan and India". Since Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to India in April 2005, Japan-India annual summit meetings have been held in respective capitals. When Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Japan in December 2006, Japan-India relationship was elevated to the "Global and Strategic Partnership".

- In September 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid an official visit to Japan and had a summit meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe. They agreed that Japan-India relationship was upgraded to “Special Strategic and Global Partnership.” In December 2015, Prime Minister Abe paid an official visit to India and had a summit meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two Prime Ministers resolved to transform the Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership into a deep, broad-based and action-oriented partnership, which reflects a broad convergence of their long-term political, economic and strategic goals. They announced “Japan and India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Region and the World” a joint statement that would serve as a guide post for the “new era in Japan-India relations.”

- In November 2016, Prime Minister Modi paid an official visit to Japan and had a summit
meeting with Prime Minister Abe. Prime Minister Abe stated that this summit meeting was a magnificent meeting that substantially advanced the "new era in Japan-India relations," and he hoped the two countries would lead the prosperity and stability of the Indo-Pacific region as a result of coordinating the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific and the "Act East" policy.

Cooperation in security fields

- During Prime Minister Singh’s visit to Japan in October 2008, two leaders issued “the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India”. There are also various frameworks of security and defense dialogue between Japan and India including “2+2” Dialogue, Defense Policy Dialogue, Military-to-Military Talks and Coast Guard-to-Coast Guard cooperation.

- At recent summit meetings, two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their desire to further deepen bilateral security and defense cooperation and institute Foreign and Defense Ministerial Dialogue (2+2), and welcomed the commencement of negotiations on the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA).

Economic relations

- During Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Japan in September 2014, two leaders agreed to set a common goal of doubling Japan’s direct investment and the number of Japanese companies in India by 2019, in order to build a win-win relationship through synergies between Modinomics and Abenomics. Prime Minister Abe intended to make an effort to realize 3.5 trillion yen of public and private investment and financing, including Official Development Assistance (ODA), to India over the coming five years. Japan expects India for improving the business environment, including the easing of regulations and the stabilization of the system. India established the “Japan Plus” office in the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in October 2014 as a "one-stop" location for resolving problems faced by Japanese companies. Japan and India agreed to set up for 11 candidates of Japanese industrial townships around DMIC and CBIC areas in April 2015. Prime Minister Abe requested India’s early decision on introducing special incentive packages in Japanese industrial townships in December 2015 and November 2016.

- India decided to introduce the Shinkansen system in December 2015, when Prime Minister Abe visited India. The Japan’s Shinkansen system is in a highest class of High-Speed Railway systems around the world in terms of its safety and accuracy. Japan and India confirmed that the General Consultant would start its work in December 2016, the construction work would begin in 2018, and the railway's operation would commence in 2023.

- India has been the largest recipient of Japanese ODA Loan for the past decades. Delhi Metro is one of the most successful examples of Japanese cooperation through the
utilization of ODA. Japan will cooperate on supporting strategic connectivity linking South Asia to Southeast Asia through the synergy between "Act East" policy and "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure."

- In terms of human resource development in the manufacturing sector in India, Japan announced its cooperation of training 30,000 Indian people over next 10 years in the Japan-India Institute for Manufacturing (JIM), providing Japanese style manufacturing skills and practices, in an effort to enhance India’s manufacturing industry base and contribute to “Make in India” and “Skill India” Initiatives. JIM and the Japanese Endowed Courses (JEC) in engineering colleges will be designated by Japanese companies in India, and this is a good example of cooperation between the public and private sectors. In summer 2017, the first four JIMs started in the States of Gujarat, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Tamil Nadu, and the first JEC was established in the State of Andhra Pradesh. Since then, more four JIMs and one JEC have started. Those institutes are also expected to give more Indian students the ambition to study the Japanese language.

Cultural relations

- The year 2012 marked the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and India. Various cultural events took place both in Japan and in India to promote mutual understanding between the two countries, under the theme of “Resurgent Japan, Vibrant India: New Perspectives, New Exchanges.”

- During the visit of Prime Minister Modi to Japan in November 2016, the two Prime Ministers agreed to mark the year 2017 as the Year of Japan-India Friendly Exchanges to further enhance people-to-people exchanges between Japan and India. The year 2017 also marks the 60th anniversary since the Cultural Agreement came into force in 1957. Various commemorating events are taking place in both countries.

Bilateral Treaties and Agreements

- Treaty of Peace (1952)
- Agreement for Air Service (1956)
- Cultural Agreement (1957)
- Agreement of Commerce (1958)
- Convention for the Avoidance of Double Taxation (1960)
- Agreement on Cooperation in the field of Science and Technology (1985)
- Japan-India Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (2011)
- Agreement between Japan and the Republic of India on Social Security (2016)
Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of India for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy