

Asia-Pacific Policy Papers Series

Japan-India Relations: Vital to the Indo-Pacific

By Kenneth I. Juster



THE EDWIN O.
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Johns Hopkins University The Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies
tel. 202-663-5812 email: reischauer@jhu.edu

The Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asian Studies

Established in 1984, with the explicit support of the Reischauer family, the Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asian Studies at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) actively supports the research and study of trans-Pacific and intra-Asian relations to advance mutual understanding between Northeast Asia and the United States.

The first Japanese-born and Japanese-speaking U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Edwin O. Reischauer (serv. 1961–66) later served as the center’s Honorary Chair from its founding until 1990. His wife Haru Matsukata Reischauer followed as Honorary Chair from 1991 to 1998. They both exemplified the deep commitment that the Reischauer Center aspires to perpetuate in its scholarly and cultural activities today.

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Johns Hopkins University–SAIS

1619 Massachusetts Avenue, NW

Washington, D.C. 20036

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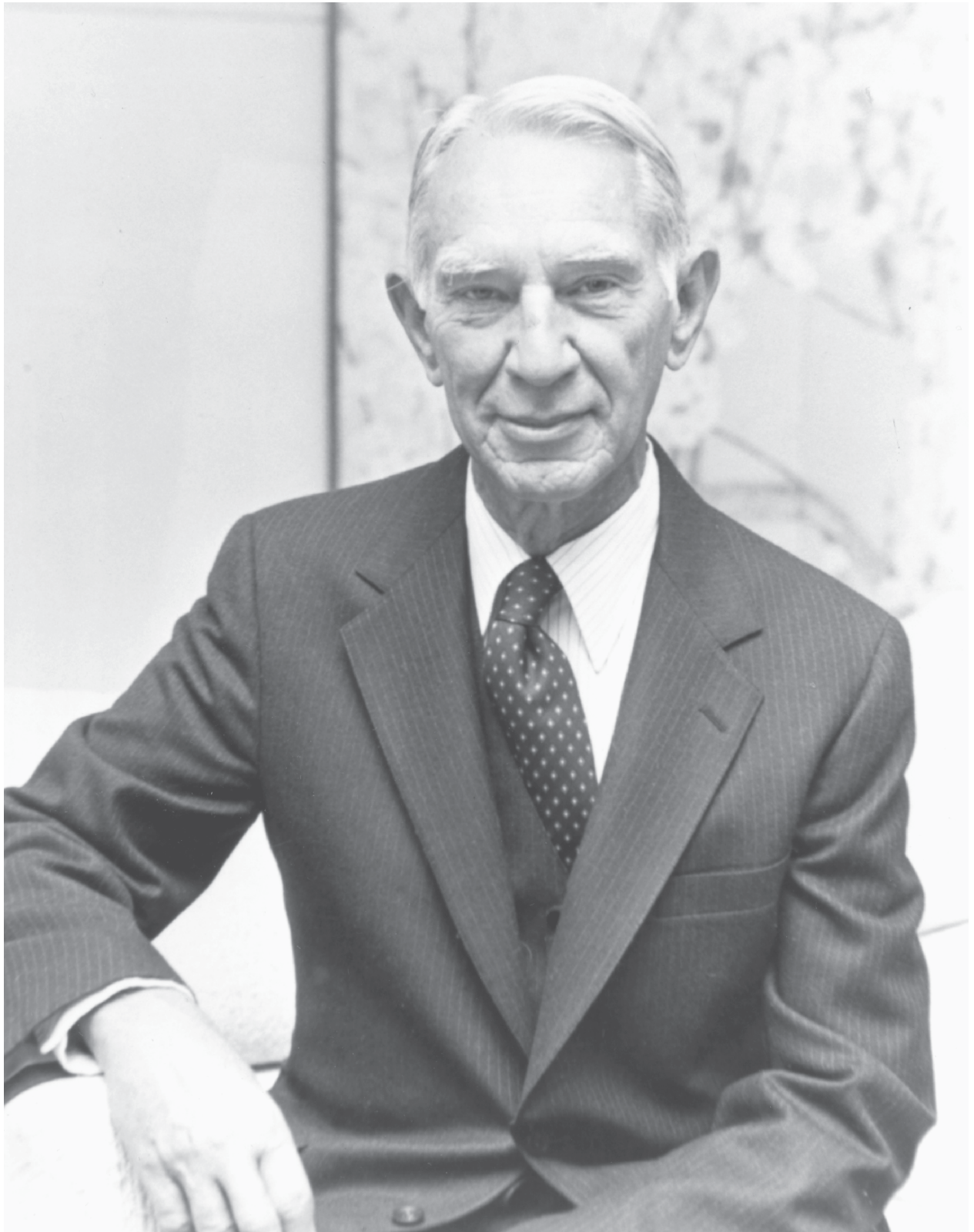
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Reischauer Memorial Lecture Series

**Japan-India Relations:
Vital to the Indo-Pacific**

By Kenneth I. Juster



Edwin O. Reischauer
(Oct.15, 1910-Sept. 1, 1990)

FOREWORD

Our center has been honored to feature a long list of distinguished Reischauer Memorial Lectures since the series was inaugurated in 2004, almost two decades ago, and the academic year that I arrived at SAIS. Our most recent lecturer, however, is both distinguished and distinct. He has a varied lifetime career—as statesman, attorney, and business executive. He is also the first personal student of Edwin O. Reischauer himself to deliver a Reischauer Memorial Lecture here. And it gives me great personal gratification to note that our speaker was once, very early in his career, a student of my own as well.

Ambassador Kenneth Juster has, as the attached biography attests, a long career of public service, at the highest levels. He began, while still in his mid-30s, as Deputy and Senior Adviser to Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger. He moved on, in a subsequent administration, to be Under Secretary at the US Department of Commerce, managing issues at the intersection of business and national security. And most recently he served as US Ambassador to India. Although his recent government work has focused on US-South Asian relations, Ken has also had a lifelong interest in Asia more generally. He spent time as an American Field Service student in Thailand. And then, fortuitously, he gained a strong personal interest in Japan.

My own first recollection of Ambassador Juster was of our meeting in the common room of Quincy House at Harvard University, where I, as a Government Department doctoral candidate, was leading a group of sophomores not much younger than I who were interested in the Japanese political economy. Sophomore seminars were rather laid-back affairs, but I noticed one member who was unusually organized, quick in response, and animated in discussion. He followed up with questions and additional thoughts, and we began a dialogue that continued through study sessions at my high-rise apartment above the Charles River, and on to the present day, with special intensity during Ken's early days at *Foreign Policy* magazine, the State Department, and the law firm Arnold and Porter. And it has been a pleasure to continue our interaction recently, getting to know Ken's vibrant family as well.

Ambassador Ken Juster, apart from his distinguished career, has from his early student days had a reflective, scholarly side. That showed clearly in several of Ken's prepared addresses from his days in New Delhi. That pattern shows itself clearly again, as I am sure the reader will note, in this short monograph. The lecture on which it is based came across several drafts, from Ambassador Juster's own hand. His honored professor, Edwin O. Reischauer, another distinguished ambassador, would no doubt be proud of his thoughtful and energetic protege.

Kent E. Calder

April 2023



Kenneth I. Juster

Ken Juster recently completed his service as the 25th U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of India (2017-2021). He is currently a Distinguished Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. Juster has over 40 years of experience as a senior government official, business executive, and lawyer.

He previously served in the U.S. government as Deputy Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs, on both the National Security Council and the National Economic Council (2017); Under Secretary of Commerce (2001-2005); Counselor (Acting) of the State Department (1992-1993); and Deputy and Senior Advisor to Deputy Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger (1989-1992).

In the private sector, Juster has been a partner at the global investment firm Warburg Pincus (2010-2017), a senior executive at Salesforce.com (2005-2010), and a senior partner at the law firm Arnold & Porter.

For his service as Ambassador, Juster received the State Department's Distinguished Service Award, the Defense Department's Distinguished Public Service Award, the Director of National Intelligence's Exceptional Service Award, and the Energy Department's Excellence Award.

Juster holds a law degree from the Harvard Law School, a Master's degree in Public Policy from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Government (Phi Beta Kappa) from Harvard College.

Reischauer Memorial Lecture:
Japan-India Relations: Vital to the Indo-Pacific

By Kenneth I. Juster
Former U.S. Ambassador to India (2017-2021)
March 15, 2023

Distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen: It is a great pleasure and truly an honor to be at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, with Kent Calder, to deliver the Reischauer Memorial Lecture. Both Kent and Edwin Reischauer played an important role in the formative years of my intellectual development – such as that may be.

Almost 50 years ago, when I was a sophomore at Harvard in the early 1970s, Kent was a graduate student in the Government Department and led a small tutorial group on East Asia in which I participated. I had come to college with an interest in this region because I had been an AFS exchange student in Thailand in high school. Kent, who has made significant contributions to the scholarship on East Asia through his numerous writings, taught me how to think clearly and analytically.

I met Professor Reischauer during my sophomore year as well, when I took his Gov. 118 course on Japanese Politics. What a knowledgeable and inspiring teacher he was. He was also a legendary U.S. Ambassador to Japan, serving from 1961 to 1966. He thus brought academic rigor to his diplomacy and real-world experience to his scholarship – a noteworthy combination that made him more effective in both pursuits. After taking Professor Reischauer’s course, I found the courage to ask him if I could do an independent study with him during my junior year, and he graciously said “yes.” Professor Reischauer subsequently served as an adviser for my senior thesis on Japanese Foreign Policy-Making During the Oil Crisis of 1972-1973. I benefited greatly from his wise counsel. In short, my many positive memories of my engagement with Kent Calder and Ed Reischauer make delivering the Reischauer Memorial Lecture a special honor for me.

Professor Reischauer’s academic focus was Japan and East Asia. I do not recall him ever mentioning India or, more broadly, the concept of the Indo-Pacific region in his course or our conversations. Today, of course, there is great focus on the Indo-Pacific, which stretches from the East Coast of Africa to the West Coast of the United States. In fact, the Indo-Pacific contains the most populous countries in the world and is home to more than half of the global population. It has the world’s largest and fastest growing economies, and countries with some of the world’s most powerful militaries. According to various measures, approximately 50 percent of global trade goes through its waters. I think it is fair to say, therefore, that the Indo-Pacific has emerged as the most dynamic region of the world.

This has certainly been reflected in the evolution of U.S. government policy. In its 2017 National Security Strategy, the U.S. government replaced the term “Asia-Pacific” with “Indo-Pacific” and committed to “a free and open Indo-Pacific.” The following year, the United States changed the name of the military’s Pacific Command to the Indo-Pacific Command. Most Americans view the Indo-Pacific through the lens of the U.S. government’s role in defining and shaping this region, in conjunction with its allies and partners. But, as many in this audience know, that perspective misses the essential role that Japan, particularly under its late Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, played in developing the concept of the Indo-Pacific and in working with India to advance that idea.

In light of my recent tenure as U.S. Ambassador to India, I would like to focus today on the Japan-India relationship and to make the case that this relationship is vital to the architecture of the Indo-Pacific and, indeed, to U.S. interests in the region. Specifically, I will discuss the central role of former Prime Minister Abe in developing the concept of the Indo-Pacific, the strategic significance of the Japan-India relationship, and the key challenges and opportunities for that partnership in the areas of trade, investment, infrastructure, defense, and diplomacy.

The Confluence of the Two Seas

The links between Japan and India go back centuries, highlighted by the spread of Buddhism from the subcontinent across Asia. But the formal ties that would eventually form a key pillar of the Indo-Pacific region began in 1952, when Japan signed a peace treaty with India establishing diplomatic relations, shortly after Japan had regained its post-war sovereignty. While the two countries generally maintained cordial relations during the Cold War, they were largely in different geopolitical camps. Japan’s priority was its security and economic relationship with the United States, while India was a leader of the non-aligned movement and closer to the Soviet Union. Japan also pursued an export-oriented economic agenda, while India pursued autarky.

With the end of the Cold War, and in the midst of a severe financial crisis, India sought economic assistance from Japan and others in 1991. Soon, the two countries began to develop closer ties. This cooperation suffered a setback in 1998, when India’s nuclear tests led to strong criticism and sanctions from much of the world, including Japan, given its special sensitivity to nuclear weapons. However, shortly after President Bill Clinton’s historic trip to India in 2000, Japan’s Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori made a similarly significant trip to India. This helped warm relations between the two Asian powers, as they agreed on building a “Global Partnership.” A few years later, during the first administration of Prime Minister Abe in 2006, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh visited Japan. There, the two institutionalized prime ministerial talks and elevated their ties to a “Strategic and Global Partnership,” a specific term the countries use for key relationships.

The next year, Prime Minister Abe visited India. He was following in the footsteps of his grandfather, Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi, who in 1957 had been the first post-war Japanese Prime Minister to visit an independent India. During Abe’s 2007 visit, he delivered a seminal speech to the Indian Parliament entitled, “The Confluence of the Two Seas.”

Early in my tenure as Ambassador, one of India's senior political figures told me that Abe's speech was "masterful" in its appeal to an Indian audience. He urged me to study it, and so, I did. Abe envisioned the Pacific and the Indian Oceans as "a dynamic coupling as seas of freedom and prosperity," referencing the book that Mughal prince Dara Shikoh had authored in India in 1655 on the "Confluence of the Two Seas." Abe asserted that Japan has "rediscovered India as a partner that shares the same values and interests and also as a friend that will work alongside us." He noted that, "as maritime states, both India and Japan have vital interests in the security of sea lanes," and he added that "a strong India is in the best interest of Japan, and a strong Japan is in the best interest of India."

Abe's speech laid the foundation for his vision of a "broader Asia" – "an immense network" that would be "open and transparent, . . . allowing people, goods, capital, and knowledge to flow freely."

Shortly before Abe was murdered in 2022, he wrote an Op-ed recounting his famous address to the Indian Parliament. In his words, "I departed from the 'Asia-Pacific' idea and introduced a new geopolitical concept that envisaged the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean as one 'free sea.' Bearing in mind China's efforts to become a military superpower, I also sought cooperation with countries in Asia that shared basic values, as well as an alignment among Japan, the United States, Australia, and India."

In essence, Abe knew that India was bound to become a leading power, and he recognized the benefits of including this major democracy in the structure of Asian geopolitics. He also encouraged Indians to join his vision of the Indo-Pacific, boosting their own perceptions of India's role in the region.

During Abe's second administration in 2016, he formally announced the concept of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" at the Tokyo International Conference on African Development in Nairobi. This concept converged with India's "Act East" Policy – its focus on economic, strategic, and cultural relations with the countries of South Asia, Southeast Asia, and the rest of the Asia-Pacific region. Soon, the concept of a "free and open Indo-Pacific," which emphasizes the importance of treating the land and maritime areas of the major oceans as a single strategic space, became integrated into Indian as well as American thinking.

Abe developed a close relationship with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, just as he had done with Prime Minister Singh. In 2015, Prime Minister Modi declared that no other strategic partnership "can exercise a more profound influence on shaping the course of Asia and our interlinked ocean regions." When the leaders met in December of that year, they issued a joint statement that further upgraded the bilateral relationship to a "Special Strategic and Global Partnership." Japan's Foreign Minister at the time was Fumio Kishida, who is Prime Minister today. Speaking in this auditorium just two months ago, Prime Minister Kishida noted the importance of Japan's relationship with India and his intention to enhance that partnership in pursuit of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

The Strategic Significance of the Japan-India Partnership

The Tokyo-Delhi partnership is strategically significant to the Indo-Pacific and to U.S. interests for several reasons. Though Japan and India are two of the largest and most powerful democracies in the region, neither seeks to be a hegemon. In fact, they share a common vision for the region that respects sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the rules-based order and supports the freedom of trade, navigation, and overflight that allows all to prosper.

Both Japan and India have longstanding territorial disputes with China that have heated up in recent years. In the case of India, which has a more than 2,000-mile disputed northern border with China, there have been military standoffs in Doklam in 2017, Ladakh in 2020, and the Tawang region in 2022. In the case of Japan, China has taken more assertive action in the East China Sea regarding Japan's claim of sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands.

Japan and India have also grown increasingly wary of the geopolitical strategy behind China's Belt and Road Initiative – known as BRI – and Chinese tactics such as predatory financing, which has often imposed unsustainable debt burdens on recipient countries. India opposed BRI from the outset and refused to participate in the first Belt and Road Forum in Beijing. While Japan initially supported BRI, it continues to champion its own alternative to it –the Partnership for Quality Infrastructure.

Accordingly, the governments of Japan and India are each departing from their cautious foreign policies to address the rise of China and to seek to prevent the emergence of a new, expansionist hegemonic power in the region. Both seek to construct a stable, multipolar architecture for the region by promoting alternatives to China's initiatives and policies, without necessarily disengaging from China's economy. And each views the other as central to its efforts to confront this strategic challenge.

Yet, as a matter of historical experience and national principle, India resists alliances. Abe's achievement, therefore, in developing the concept of the Indo-Pacific was to lay the foundation for drawing India into institutionalized cooperation with Japan, the United States, and Australia, in what is known as the Quad. The Quad is a unique grouping of three allies –Australia, Japan, and the United States – and one strategic partner – India. It was formed in 2007, but critics labeled it an "Asian NATO," and Chinese protests led to its disbanding in 2008. Nine years later, in 2017, Japan and the United States led the effort to revitalize the Quad, first at the working level, then with ministerial meetings, and finally with leadership summits.

The Quad is careful not to focus explicitly on security issues nor to invoke publicly the name of China. But as China's military activity on India's northern border has become increasingly aggressive, India has become more comfortable coordinating activities with the three Quad allies. These have been primarily in non-controversial areas that promote a positive agenda for the region, such as vaccine distribution, resilient supply chains, critical and emerging technologies, maritime domain awareness, and disaster relief and humanitarian assistance.

At the same time, India's longstanding resistance to the involvement of third countries in its neighborhood is gradually giving way to cooperation with Japan and the United States, among others, in managing regional challenges, including through expanded military exercises.

A strong Japan-India relationship is a critical component of the Quad. India's pursuit of strategic autonomy may make it reluctant, at times, to coordinate too closely with the United States, perhaps so not to be seen as a junior partner. For India, Japan is a less conspicuous partner than the United States, and it may well be easier for Delhi to work together with Tokyo in some areas. I believe such initiatives will usually be consistent with U.S. interests and thus worthy of U.S. support even if it is not directly involved. Among other benefits, the activities of Japan and India working in tandem may well seem a bit less alarming to China or other countries in the region than similar activities involving the United States.

The fact is that, however important the Indo-Pacific region is to the United States, America has global commitments and needs others to share certain burdens. The Japan-India partnership does just that, especially in terms of maritime capabilities and support for smaller countries in the region. In essence, the United States is gradually moving away from the hub and spoke system of alliances to what the U.S. National Security Strategy now calls "a latticework of strong, resilient, and mutually reinforcing relationships" with allies and partners – such as in the Quad – that can take on greater regional responsibilities, thereby reducing the burden on the United States.

Finally, I think it is fair to say that Japan and India may well be more culturally sensitive than the United States and may have a softer touch with their Indo-Pacific counterparts. As we all know, America's focus, at times, on human rights or economic sanctions can irritate other countries. Moreover, the smaller nations of the Indo-Pacific, especially those in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), do not want to have to choose between China and the United States or be caught up in a new Cold War. Japan and India can work more comfortably with these countries, removed from the context of the U.S.-China rivalry.

Key Challenges and Opportunities

Let me now turn to some of the key challenges and opportunities over the next few years for the Japan-India partnership. First, I will focus on economic cooperation, which has been central to the bilateral relationship and can have a positive impact more broadly in the Indo-Pacific.

This includes trade, investment, and infrastructure. Second, there is potential for strategic cooperation in defense and diplomacy as each country undergoes significant internal changes in these areas, with profound implications for the region.

Economic Cooperation

The economic relationship between Japan and India today is positive but modest. The complementary structures and strengths of the two countries suggest the possibility of significant returns from

greater economic engagement. I believe there is political will in Tokyo and Delhi to make this happen, both to add ballast to their strategic ties and to avoid economic dependency on China.

Trade

Let's start with trade, where the foundation of the relationship between Japan and India is their "Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement" – or CEPA. This Agreement came into effect in 2011 and provided for tariff reductions on approximately 90 percent of the goods traded between the two countries. While there was substantial growth in bilateral trade during the first couple of years of CEPA implementation – from approximately \$13 billion to almost \$19 billion a year – bilateral trade then decreased over the next few years and now largely fluctuates between these two points. For the world's third and fifth largest economies, these trade flows fall short of their potential.

An expanded trade relationship for the two countries makes sense on its own terms but also as part of Japan and India's response to China's robust regional economic agenda. The two countries cannot help but notice how China has used its economic influence in the Indo-Pacific to advance its bilateral and regional political goals. China was one of the first countries to ratify the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership – known as RCEP – which was also signed by the ten members of ASEAN as well as Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand. India had been part of the negotiations, but eventually withdrew in 2019 shortly before the signing.

China is the largest trading partner with virtually every RCEP country. This makes China the regional economic center and the country best positioned to dominate regional supply chains. China also unexpectedly submitted a formal application in 2021 to join the other major regional trade arrangement – the high standards Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership – or CPTPP. In 2017, the United States abruptly withdrew from the predecessor to this pact – the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement. But under Japanese leadership, the remaining 11 signatories revived the agreement and created the successor CPTPP.

In addition, China has applied to join the regional Digital Economy Partnership Agreement – currently involving Chile, New Zealand, and Singapore – which is aimed at facilitating digital trade. It is clear from these initiatives that China is seeking to shape the rules for trade and investment while promoting integration with its neighbors and increasing their dependence on Beijing.

Japan and India – as well as the United States – would benefit from a coordinated trade strategy to compete with China and to address the critical importance that countries in the region place on economic issues. For these reasons, Washington launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework – or IPEF – in 2022. One of IPEF's four pillars is fair and resilient trade. While 13 other countries, including Japan and India, have joined the IPEF initiative, India has decided for now not to be part of the trade pillar. Moreover, Washington has announced that issues of market access are not on the table. Perhaps this position will be modified over time, but the lack of greater access to the U.S.

market may well mute the enthusiasm of Asian participants in IPEF and reduce the likelihood of a significant trade arrangement being implemented under it.

For Japan and India, the first step in a trade strategy would be to update their bilateral trade agreement. Beyond that, and despite India's preference for bilateral agreements, I believe the two countries should work on common trade concerns in the Quad. After all, every Quad member has a bilateral agreement with the other – except for India and the United States. While Quad members are not in sync on all trade issues, the existing bilateral agreements among the partners provide a foundation for the Quad to adopt a building block approach by beginning to address select matters of interest, such as trade facilitation and liberalization of services sectors. Because trade is both strategic and filled with esoteric detail, trade negotiators would benefit from having Quad leaders engaged to help them make the tough political decisions. Leaders could delicately provide the impetus for a pragmatic plan on trade to help shape the regional architecture and perhaps expand it over time to include other countries in the region.

India and others should appreciate the importance of such regional measures in structuring alternative supply chains, reducing vulnerabilities associated with relying on China for inputs and raw materials, and shaping the norms and standards of the digital economy. In some respects, Japan may be better suited than the United States to play a leading role on digital matters because, unlike America, it is not affected by the controversial issues surrounding many of the large U.S. high-tech companies.

Investment and Infrastructure

Let me now turn to development assistance and investments in infrastructure, a positive story that reflects bilateral goodwill and the potential for cooperation in third countries. Japan has been providing Official Development Assistance – known as ODA – to India since 1958. Over the past two decades, India has been among the largest recipients of ODA from the Japan International Cooperation Agency, as well as a major recipient of lending from Japan's Bank for International Cooperation – or JBIC. JBIC has financed several major infrastructure projects in India. These include the construction of the Delhi Metro, substantial work on the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, and support for the construction of India's first high-speed train line – from Mumbai to Ahmedabad.

India has also welcomed Japan as a partner for the construction of strategically important highways and bridges in India's underdeveloped northeast region. This is significant because India had not initially invited other nations to invest in this sensitive region, situated above the Bay of Bengal, where local conflicts have sometimes complicated government and private projects. This area is where India's Act East policy converges with Japan's vision of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, connecting South and Southeast Asia. In fact, Delhi and Tokyo have created the Act East Forum as a platform to collaborate in India's northeast region.

The emergence of Japan as a key partner in northeast India demonstrates the trust between the two countries and has played an important role in strengthening their bilateral relationship. The infrastructure projects there, which improve connectivity in the region, include the construction of a 19-kilometer bridge over the Brahmaputra River to connect the states of Assam and Meghalaya.

There are other opportunities, both in India and the surrounding region, for strategically employing Japanese grants and JBIC funding. One leading commentator, for example, has noted the possibility of jointly developing civilian air and seaport infrastructure in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. This Indian archipelago is situated at the mouth of the Malacca Strait, a critical position in the Bay of Bengal for shipping and a possible military choke-hold. Japan and India share an interest in securing safe passage in this strategic location, especially as China increasingly projects its naval assets in this area. Moreover, the Indian subsidiary of Japan's NEC Corporation recently completed an optical submarine cable between Chennai and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, thereby expanding internet service for the people on the islands.

Japan and India should also continue to work together on projects in third countries in the region. This includes efforts in Bangladesh involving the construction of roads and bridges and in Sri Lanka involving infrastructure for imports of liquified natural gas. In addition, there is a joint effort by Tokyo and Delhi in East Africa – the Asia-Africa Growth Corridor – to work with others to enhance quality infrastructure and connectivity in this part of the region, in some measure to balance China's extensive outlays under BRI.

Beyond development assistance in infrastructure and connectivity, there is substantial room for cooperation among Japan, India, and the ASEAN countries in building resilient supply chains. Japanese and Indian firms both have a way to go in diversifying their manufacturing and supply chains away from China. Japan can combine its capital and technology with India's highly skilled manpower to develop new manufacturing and production hubs in India to serve the region and beyond.

Defense and Diplomacy

Moving to defense and diplomacy, despite different geopolitical positions during the Cold War, Japan and India have increasingly found common cause in recent years. This has been driven in large part by their shared strategic clarity regarding China's aggressive military activity and predatory economic tactics in the Indo-Pacific. As a result, both countries have become more ambitious in their foreign and defense policies, including their cooperation with each other.

Japan recently adopted a new National Security Strategy, National Defense Strategy, and National Defense Buildup Program, with the goal of significantly increasing defense spending over the next five years so that it reaches two percent of GDP. This would roughly double what Japan has been spending and likely make its defense budget the third largest in the world. As a central element of its strategy to deter attacks from China and North Korea, Japan plans to develop counterstrike capabilities in addition to its missile defense systems. This includes building its own long-range

missiles and, in the interim, purchasing U.S. Tomahawks. Tokyo's strategy also emphasizes the importance of enhancing security cooperation with allies and like-minded countries such as India. All of this represents a substantial policy change and welcome development.

India is seeking to build up its defense forces as well, primarily in response to tensions with China but also to protect its economic, humanitarian, and other interests. India's defense spending has increased steadily over the last several years, though a significant amount of its military budget goes for personnel costs, with a lesser amount going to capital expenditures on military arms and systems. To strengthen its forces on its border with China, India has redeployed six army divisions from its northwestern border with traditional foe Pakistan. It has also created a powerful chief of defense staff position and started to realign military commands.

In terms of defense equipment, India's need to diversify away from its heavy dependence on Russian arms will inevitably be accelerated by the significant military losses Russia has suffered in its invasion of Ukraine and the multilateral sanctions against Moscow. Delhi's priority is to build up its domestic manufacturing capability and develop an indigenous military industrial complex. Even with assistance from U.S. and other companies willing to co-produce military items in India, this indigenization effort will take time. In fact, some commentators wonder whether "Make in India" may hamper India's immediate effort to modernize its forces and perhaps leave it with lower operational readiness in the short-term.

Tokyo and Delhi should welcome each other's new military efforts. There is also room for them to expand their bilateral defense cooperation.

Maritime domain awareness and coordination are extremely important to the two countries, as well as to the region more broadly. Japan and India are heavily dependent on imported energy sources. They therefore rely on the significant energy flow and commercial trade that goes through the Strait of Hormuz, to the west of India, and the Malacca Strait, to its east. The safety and security of these sea lines of communication are directly linked to the economic well-being of Japan, India, and many other countries.

Accordingly, Tokyo's and Delhi's naval forces have cooperated extensively over the years and have engaged in increasingly complex bilateral and multilateral naval exercises. The two countries have also signed a logistics agreement providing for their militaries to access each other's bases for support and services. And they recently agreed to step up coordination between their Air Forces, including their inaugural Air Force fighter exercise, which will provide for greater collaboration and interoperability between the air services.

The availability of advanced military technology from Japan could play an important role in the bilateral relationship. Both countries have spoken about the prospect of defense sales by Japan to India. There are reports that the Japanese had hoped to assist India in modernizing its military capabilities through the sale of its amphibious aircraft and diesel-electric attack submarines. But

pricing issues, among other concerns, seem to have kept this from happening. Japan is now in discussion with India on the possible transfer of stealth antennas for naval destroyers.

India would also like Japanese companies to invest in India's defense corridors and pursue joint production of defense equipment in India. However, despite the political commitment to strengthen these ties, private sector cooperation has been challenging. The Japanese defense sector is generally cautious about participating in global defense markets without government-to-government programs and is sensitive to the extremely competitive Indian defense procurement process, which is also beset with complicated bureaucratic procedures and offset guidelines.

One irritant in the Tokyo-Delhi partnership involves Russia, which is a friend of India but has a mixed relationship with Japan. Tokyo still seeks a solution to its longstanding claim against Moscow over the four southernmost Kuril Islands, which Moscow has controlled since the end of World War II. The Japanese, therefore, did not appreciate India's participation in a September 2022 military exercise with Russia and China close to these disputed islands. In addition, India's refusal to publicly condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its increased purchases of oil from Moscow is at odds with Japan's strong condemnation of the invasion and active support of sanctions to isolate Russia. These differences are a manifestation of India's current dependence on Russian arms and spare parts as well as its emphasis on strategic autonomy, both of which inhibit more formal security coordination with Japan and others, including the United States.

Nonetheless, the Japan-India defense relationship continues to grow, especially in terms of military exercises. This allows for a corresponding reduction in the security burden for the United States in the Indo-Pacific, a fact welcomed by Washington, which has borne a substantial portion of that burden over the years.

Japan and India also have expanded diplomatic cooperation in recent years. They have coordinated through a bilateral 2+2 dialogue among foreign and defense ministers and in multilateral venues such as the Quad, as well as worked together on the ground in third countries. This helps the two democratic powers exchange information and find common approaches on China and on places such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, and North Korea. Tokyo and Delhi could do more together to support countries in the region, perhaps through exchanges of members of parliament, governors or mayors, judges, and academics. This would assist other countries in building stronger political, legal, and educational institutions. Japan and India could also strengthen their coordination in multilateral organizations, such as the East Asia Summit and the United Nations, to lessen the influence of China.

In addition, this year presents a unique opportunity for Tokyo and Delhi to work together during their respective presidencies of the G7 and G20. Prime Ministers Kishida and Modi are both focusing on greater engagement with the low-income countries of the so-called Global South on issues such as energy, food, climate change, and health. The lead up to the summit meetings this year could provide the occasion for Tokyo and Delhi to coordinate on the G7 and G20 agendas,

including on the many challenges facing developing nations. In short, the Japan-India relationship has the potential to be even more central to the Indo-Pacific and the world.

The Importance of Leadership

Let me add one final thought about the drivers of the Japan-India relationship. Government institutions in Japan and India have always been very important and influential. There are also structural forces, such as the rise of China, that affect Japan-India relations. But an equally significant feature in the evolution of the Japan-India partnership has been the role of political leadership.

Prime Minister Abe's warm personal relationship, first with Prime Minister Singh and then with Prime Minister Modi, was critical to the adoption of the concept of the Indo-Pacific, the growth of the Japan-India partnership, and the creation of the Quad. Prime Minister Kishida is now seeking to continue that personal connection with Modi. A year ago, on his first visit to India as Prime Minister, Kishida wrote an Op-ed about the "tremendous dynamism of India" and expressed his hope that his visit would "deepen the 'Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership' even further" – a sentiment that he reiterated during his speech here in January. This augurs well for the future of the Japan-India partnership, as Prime Minister Kishida prepares for a visit to Delhi next week, where he is expected to invite Prime Minister Modi to participate in the G7 summit in Hiroshima in May.

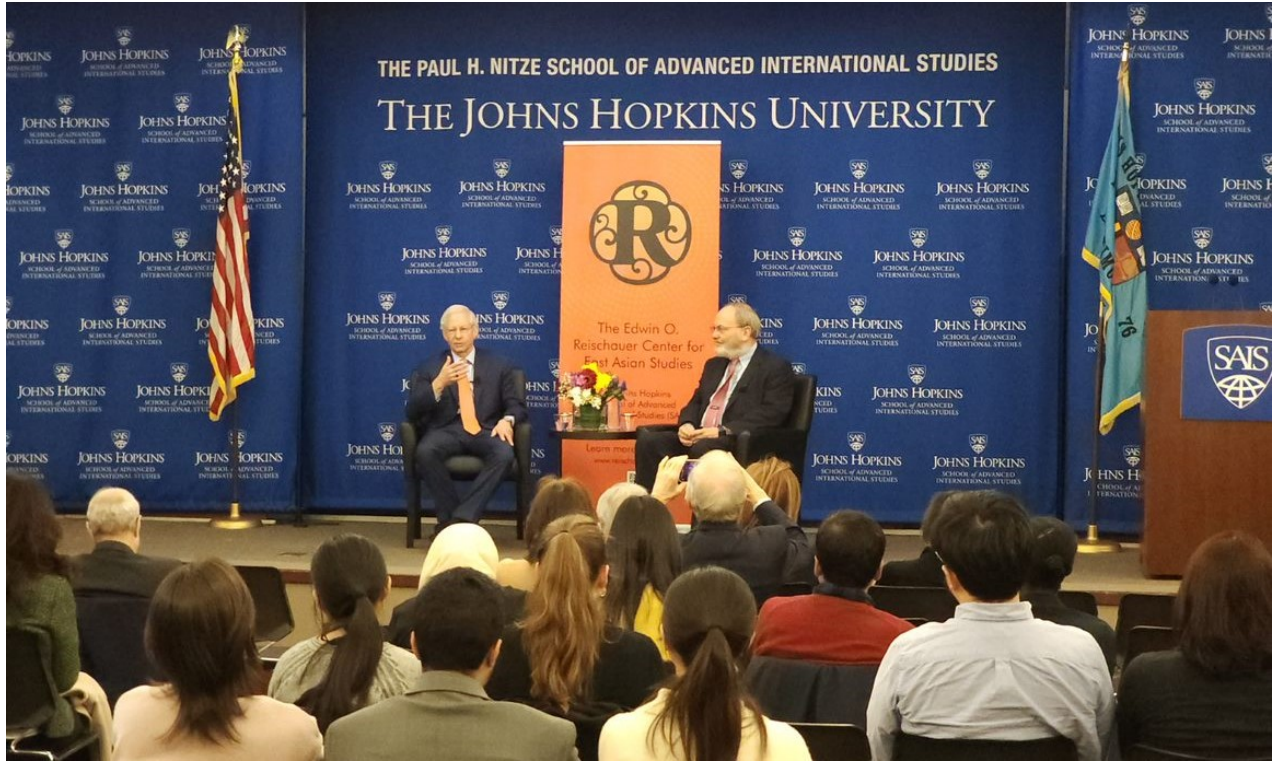
Conclusion

Let me conclude by coming back to the U.S. perspective on the region. The U.S. government has encouraged the Japan-India relationship and those in the know fully appreciate its strategic significance. The Japan-India partnership is a vital strand in the latticework of mutually reinforcing relationships that the United States hopes will be integral to the architecture of the Indo-Pacific. In addition, that partnership is a key element of integrated deterrence in the region and of diplomatic coordination to preserve the rules-based order.

Toward the end of his career, Professor Reischauer wrote that, "as Japan becomes a larger part of the world economy, it becomes more and more necessary for Japan to play a greater worldwide role and take active stands on issues." While he could not have anticipated the many developments since then, I am confident that Edwin Reischauer would be pleased to see Japan's centrality today and its growing partnership with India.

Thank you very much.

Photos



Ambassador Kenneth Juster and Dr. Kent Calder discuss Japan-India Relations



SAIS 2nd Year MAIR student Nishant Annu asks Ambassador Juster a question during the Q&A session as students and guests observe



Ambassador Juster addresses audience questions while Dr. Calder moderates



Ambassador Juster and Dr. Calder share a handshake following the ambassador's address



Ambassador Juster and Dr. Calder speak with student researchers Shahad Turkistani (SAIS MAIR 2nd year) and Nishant Annu (SAIS MAIR 2nd year) at the Reception.



Reischauer Center researchers with Ambassador Juster. Top row (from left to right): Devin Woods, Dylan Harris, Takahiro Moriwaki, Yuya Uno, Fumitoshi Watahiki, Nishant Annu. Middle row: Kai-chun Wang, Adriana Reinecke, Dr. Kent Calder, Amb. Ken Juster, Mizumi Dutcher, Kotaro Shiojiri, Shu Fukuya, Morgan Engel. Front row: Okung Obang, Sara Sekimitsu, Shahad Turkistani, Fumiko Sasaki.

Reischauer Memorial Lecture Series

Overcoming the "broken dialogue with Japan" was a signature concern of Ambassador Edwin O. Reischauer throughout his lifetime, and especially during his five years as Ambassador to Japan (1961-1966). In memory of Ambassador Reischauer, this annual lecture series was established in October, 2003. Over the years, a series of distinguished current and former policymakers have contributed their thinking, in a mutual effort to deepen trans-Pacific and Indo-Pacific understanding.



The Edwin O. Reischauer Center for East Asian
Studies Johns Hopkins University SAIS
1619 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20036
reischauercenter.org
facebook.com/reischauercenter