

A New Troika For India's Northeast: Bangladesh, Japan And India

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Abstract

This paper is an attempt to project the probability of emergence of a new troika for India's northeast states- Bangladesh, Japan and India. In this paper a short analysis of the potential of these three countries in holistic as well as sustainable development of isolated northeastern states, is being done . Furthermore, a brief introduction of their common points of interests and underlying impediments are discussed. Their present state of affairs and future prospects are being introduced. So far literature on NER has been either focused on underlying impediments or maximum to the bilateral relationships among India, Bangladesh and Japan. This paper focuses on how this emerging continuity can be achieved because significance of minilaterals is inevitable in the changing geopolitical and geoeconomic conditionalities. Cooperation among these countries needs to go beyond comprehensive and not just stagnant to economic exploitation of resources of each other's territory.

This paper would analyse the role of Bangladesh and Japan in integrated development of NER and also explores the possibility of this triad getting a full fledged formal recognition . Finally, the paper underlines the NER's development policies could not be insensible to the regional security and geopolitical scenario of the twenty first century. This paper ends with some figured out policy suggestions and recommendations for a win-win situation for all stakeholders.

Key words - *Troika, Bangladesh, Sustainable, geopolitical ,Japan, Northeast*

Introduction

¹The Northeast region, which forms the easternmost border of India, comprises eight states; Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim. The landlocked NER is connected with mainland India by the narrow Siliguri corridor. This geographical isolation has been responsible for its underdevelopment because, since



pre-independence time its accessibility has remained weak due to underdeveloped transport links with the mainland and deprived support from the Government. Besides this, it has difficulties such as ethnic conflicts, insurgency, illegal migration etc. But for the past few years, it is undergoing positive changes. India's concerted efforts in prioritising NER and its contacts with Southeast Asian and East Asian countries has been reflected in its which was consolidated as 'Act East policy'. Apart from political will, "the Cobweb Model" of global politics is also contributing to such dramatic changes. The cobweb model refers to a web of relationships which has created a condition of 'complex interdependence' in which states are drawn into cooperation and integration by forces such as closer trading and other economic relationships.

Countries like Bangladesh and Japan have emerged as major development partners for this region. The Northeast needs these countries as much as these two nations need our northeast. And, this convergence of interests will lead to a shared path of development and hence, the need of troika comes in.

North Eastern Region (NER) has all the potentialities to develop into India's powerhouse as it has abundant rich sources of energy, natural gas, coal, oil, limestone, and other mineral resources. Besides, this region has a potential water resource in the river Brahmaputra and its tributary, this region is also rich in plantation crops, medicinal plants, horticultural products, vegetables, and spices. This region also provides opportunities for tourism, having rare flora and fauna, scenic beauty, unique performing arts and handicrafts.² It's the moment for India to leverage both the capability

¹<https://www.dhyeyaias.com/current-affairs/daily-current-affairs/pm-devine-underdevelopment-in-north-east-region-addressed>

² [India's Act East policy and North East India: A Critical Review](#)

of NE and friendly relations with these two countries for the development of India as whole.

If these triad turns into reality, it will be a much needed minilateral framework to overcome contemporary four C's i.e. **China, Counter terrorism, Climate change and cybercrime**. For relations to continue further, these partnerships must be based on **real-politik** rather than ideological considerations. There is large scope and benefits from exploring ways and means to further deepen cooperation between Japan and North-east Indian states and Bangladesh by convening intellectual, commercial, and cultural exchanges with vibrant exchange of ideas, skills, and experiences.³

Why Troika?

⁴The term Troika, derived from the Russian term for a carriage with three horses, can be used to describe any type of collaboration involving three groups.⁵ Yet there is no explicit Troika between India's northeast, Japan, and Bangladesh, but these countries share common interests and are already engaging at bilateral level.



So the question arises here is What's the "new" in this troika? Is there any old or existing troika? Yes, G20 also has Troika which consists of previous, current and incoming presidents. The "new" in this troika means it would be the first troika specifically for northeastern development. India should push for such a minilateral due to its double advantage. Firstly, it helps India in maintaining strategic autonomy and Secondly, in pursuing close partnerships in specific fields.

Bangladesh, as our neighbour and a South Asian country, is engaging with the northeast due to its strategic location, vast natural resources and to leverage its unrealized economic potential. Japan, as an East Asian country, engrossed NER to counter Chinese influence in

³ [Third India japan intellectual conclave](#)

⁴ [Nagalandpost](#) (edited)

⁵ [Eurofound](#)

the South Asian region and viewed the excellence of people in the service sector as attractive for investment. Despite the geographical separation between India - Japan and the border issue between India - Bangladesh, such mutual interests override any divergences and lays the possibility of a triad. NER and Bangladesh's proximity to the Bay of Bengal region is in line with the "connected Bay of Bengal" ambition of Japan's Free and open Indo-pacific. Hence, this is the right time to think beyond bilateral ties.

This triad holds the potential in resolving mutual challenges like on the one hand, it would be helpful in curbing drug trafficking and human smuggling, while on other hand, **Demographic dynamics** also entails complementarities between them. Japan is facing an ageing population problem whereas India and Bangladesh are entering in the demographic gift phase. Here lies the scope for three to cooperate in leveraging human resources of northeast India.

This triad is inevitable in countering Chinese hegemonic ambitions in the South China sea. India, as world's largest democracy, through its 'VACCINE MAITRI' exported vaccines to low income countries in South Asia during pandemic, helping shift the image from that of a "**dominant big bro**" to a "**caring elder sibling**". Japan, Asia's largest maritime democracy, already enjoys good relations with India and Bangladesh and further providing assistance for infrastructural development in Bangladesh and Northeast will engender more positive perceptions for Japan in the region.

In the context of increasing Chinese presence in the Indian ocean region, both Bangladesh and India are important security partners of Japan for promoting its Fair and Open Indo-Pacific vision. India needs Bangladesh's territorial connectivity and Japan's economic support to project itself as a regional power and avoid driving its neighbours closer to China. The emerging tripartite partnership is also a logical extension of Japan's growing focus on South Asia and India's "**Neighbourhood First**" policy. The coordinating policies of New Delhi, Dhaka, and Japan reflect a tendency towards a security-centric approach as well as their mutual concerns about rising Chinese economic and military influence.

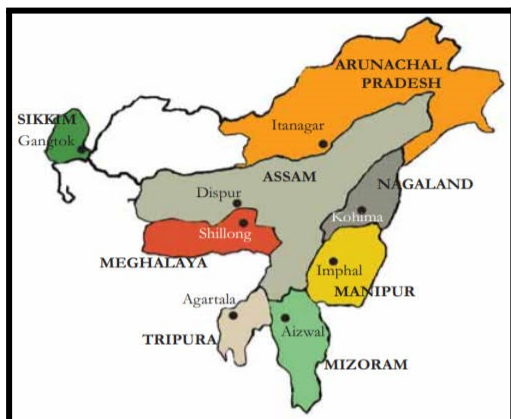
The **BIMSTEC** (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectorial and Technical Cooperation) comprising Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan is a sub-regional cooperation initiative in Bay of Bengal. Connectivity remains a key priority area for BIMSTEC to accelerate long-term economic growth of member countries and India is a lead country for this sector, especially its focus on improving accessibility of NER to Southeast Asia. The BIMSTEC grouping currently lacks a partner, which is economically and technologically advanced and Japan has the second largest economy and stock market

capitalization in the world⁶. It makes the case for Japan to join BIMSTEC and the Indo-Bangladesh-Japan partnership would play a pivotal role in pushing for Japan's entry into grouping.

In the context of infrastructure build-up, several bilateral and trilateral developmental projects are under construction in the field of education, connectivity etc. What is needed is to improve organic linkages i.e. people-to-people relations. And the need of troika comes into picture, to utilise these friendly relations to its maximum for betterment of all.

Recently held **third India-Japan Intellectual Conclave (11-12 April, 2023)** hosted by Asian Confluence (ASCON), in Agartala, Tripura,⁷ also explored India-Japan-Bangladesh collaboration for path-breaking changes in the region in upcoming few years.

Why only northeastern states?



⁸ NER is referred to as the land of seven sisters, constituting 3.78% of the country's population with 5,483 Km of international borders. The focus is on NER and not on any other state due to its strategic and political importance. It is referred to as the “**gateway to the Indo-Pacific**”. India with US, Japan, Australia, France and other like minded countries are making concerted efforts to accelerate regional connectivity at a time when

China is pushing hard in its backyard.

It needs to be protected from illegal migrants coming from Bangladesh especially in Assam and drug trafficking due to its proximity to the golden triangle of drugs. People living in the North East of India are acutely vulnerable to the dangerous consequences of climate change because the states' poor economic conditions don't empower them to fight against the odds.⁹ As these regions share borders with Nepal, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh, from the perspective of security, it would be foolish not to prioritise NER.

Since independence, integration of northeast states into mainstream India has been a national agenda and the present government's developmental model emphasised ‘**Act fast**

⁶ [researchgate](#)

⁷ [The Hindu](#)

⁸ https://www.insightsonindia.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/north_east_1.jpg

⁹ [Deccan herald](#)

for northeast’ and ‘Act first for northeast’. Mr. Modi visited NER 60 times in the past nine years, launching various infrastructural projects and showing the inclusive approach of his government. This area is significant from not just an economic perspective but also its socio-cultural diversity and historical values.

The Government of India is also prioritising the northeast in its developmental agenda due to its potential to emerge as the **“growth engine of India”**. Leveraging the economic potential requires enhancing relations with countries like Bangladesh, Myanmar, Japan, etc. The time is now for India to leverage northeastern potential to achieve the vision of a developed nation by 2047 by turning towards collaboration with various stakeholders and searching for the best development partners.

Northeast- Bangladesh:

India and Bangladesh share a border of approximately 4,100 km including four northeastern states of Assam, Tripura, Meghalaya, and Mizoram. India and Bangladesh share historical, civilizational, and cultural ties. By partition, the northeast lost not merely connectivity but also centuries-old trade routes. And it is impossible to connect the northeastern region with the mainland of India without Bangladesh hence, reconnection between the two is needed today in times of changing nature of the geopolitics of the region. Indian Minister of state of Defence Mr. Ajay Bhatt while attending a seminar in Guwahati to commemorate the 50 years of liberation of Bangladesh said- **“Northeast is like a rising sun for both India and Bangladesh”**. [sep, 2021]

1. Trade and connectivity-

Investment in NER is being opened for Bangladesh. The rise of these geographical partners is mutual e.g. Bangladesh is seeking a market for investment and exports which could be a great opportunity for NE in pursuing its own development. Key exports from the NER to Bangladesh include raw materials such as coal, limestone, boulders, and agro-horticultural products (ginger and citrus fruits). Imports from Bangladesh, comprise finished commodities such as cement, synthetic fabrics, Ready Made Goods (RMG), and processed food[ORF]. Besides sharing borders, they are **“natural markets”** for each other due to geographical proximity, reduced transaction costs and common language. This signals resource-based trade with Bangladesh. India also has a trade surplus with Bangladesh.

Inland waterways have existed since 1952 but several new routes and ports have been developed. Recently, commercial operations between mainland India and northeast have been started through **Mongla and Chattogram port. Ashuganj port** (Bangladesh) on River Meghna will be jointly revamped by the two governments. India plans to construct a liquefied natural gas (LNG) pipeline which will be connected to the North East Natural

Gas Pipeline Grid in Tripura connecting the country to Myanmar and Bangladesh to secure its energy source.¹⁰

2. Illegal migration and Rohingya's issue

Rohingyas are muslim minority community belonging to the Rakhine state of Myanmar , but Myanmar considers them as “illegal migrants” from Bangladesh, leading to their migration in neighbouring countries of Bangladesh and India. The “Rohingya crisis” has created a number of security threats for Bangladesh and India both. According to¹¹ the Indian government, Rohingya refugees in India are vulnerable to radicalization¹² and Pakistan-based militant groups might exploit them to incite violence. Similarly, it causes a number of security threats for Bangladesh, including radicalization, terrorism¹³, infighting among refugees, and interethnic conflict.¹⁴

Last year, India's National Investigative Agency (NIA) found evidence of a syndicate network operating in states of Assam and Meghalaya for illegal trafficking of Rohingyas into India¹⁵. India and Bangladesh need to cooperate on the demand of repatriation of Rohingyas to stop their illegal entry from Bangladesh and prevent an external security threat to a sensitive area of Jammu and Kashmir. As India's Former Foreign Secretary and present Foreign Minister S. Jaishankar has told the members of a parliamentary panel in New Delhi that India is in touch with Myanmar and Bangladesh on the Rohingya issue and examining the matter through a humanitarian prism.[November 2017]. Facilitating the Rohingya's repatriation process would earn India the image of a “**net security provider**” in the region and also a **humanitarian power**.

3. River water sharing

Transboundary river management in the Ganga-Brahmaputra system is a thorn in the largely cordial relationship between two neighbours. Disputes on river Ganga and Teesta are most common and frequent ones. This tension can be traced back to the politics of the British colonial period, where modernization and development projects would take precedence over conserving the ecological balance of river basins. This culminated in the construction of the Calcutta Port, an important centre for trade and navigation of the Bhagirathi-Hooghly River System¹⁶. Post independence, India successfully got this ecologically strategic point. Geo-politics of the region got altered with the liberation of

¹⁰ [Pipeline journal](#)

¹¹ [Aljazeera](#)

¹² [dw](#)

¹³ [thpbd](#)

¹⁴ [South asian values](#)

¹⁵ [The diplomat](#)

¹⁶ [e-ir](#)

Bangladesh in 1971. Bangladesh and India established the Joint River Commission to legislate over the Farakka Project in 1972.

Former United Nations water expert Dr. S.I. Khan said that, “The water dispute with India is as old as the inception of Bangladesh and Bangladesh has fifty-four trans-boundary rivers with India, but there is only a water sharing treaty with India on the Ganges River”.

Recent visit of Bangladesh PM Sheikh Hasina to India resolved the centuries old Teesta water dispute straining their relations by signing a MoU on water sharing. But there is an ongoing debate on India’s plan to build a high dam on River Barak (known as Surma-Kushiyara and Meghna in Bangladesh) at Tipaimukh in the state of Manipur. As the river is a major trans-boundary river between India and Bangladesh, the proposal for this large dam raised concerns in lower riparian Bangladesh over the question of diminished flow in Surma-Kushiyara and especially the possible negative impact on the *Haor* region in Sylhet district.¹⁷ Therefore a clear comprehensive study of the negative impacts of the dam must be done before India begins the construction to assess its effects on Bangladesh and avoid any future discord.

The solution to this river water sharing problem lies in political will and coordination of policies of governments. Ramaswami R. Aiyar, former water resource secretary of India, said in an interview, “Politically, good relations are key to water sharing disputes”.

North-East and Japan

Japan has been a significant developmental partner of India in general and northeast in particular. Close ties with Japan offer many advantages, mainly to maintain presence in the Indian ocean and accelerate economic growth. Geographical location of India and Japan inextricably links their security and trade with the maritime domain. Both India and Japan are heavily dependent on oceans, for 90% of their trade is carried via crucial International Sea Lanes (ISLs) in the Indo-Pacific region¹⁸. As India is trying hard in strengthening relations with like minded countries in the region under the vision of **SAGAR(Security and Growth for All)**, Japan is a crucial partner.

¹⁷ **India-Bangladesh Trans-Boundary River Management: Understanding the Tipaimukh Dam Controversy by Jaya Thakur(ORF)**

¹⁸ [jcwa](#)

Japan-NER shares not merely economic ties but deep cultural bonds e.g. Buddhism, Battle of Kohima etc. Japan’s engagement with Northeast India remains steadfast, and sometimes as argued by Japanese scholars, shaped by “common history”.¹⁹

1. Connectivity and Infrastructure

The Government of Japan is investing in various connectivity and infrastructure development projects in these states through ODA (official development assistance) and also corporate funds. Recent projects worth mentioning are listed below²⁰ -

Project Name	State
Northeast road network connectivity improvement project	Assam and Meghalaya
Sustainable forest management project	Tripura
Forest management project	Nagaland
Biodiversity conservation and forest management project	Sikkim
Technical cooperation project	Mizoram
Guwahati water supply project	Assam

There are also talks going on to start direct flights from Guwahati to Tokyo giving a push to improve organic linkages. In addition, private Japanese organisations, such as the Nippon Foundation, have financed the construction of the Imphal War Museum in Manipur in Northeast India, in memory of the nearly 70,000 Japanese soldiers who perished in the Battles of



ANI @ANI

Japan will collaborate closely with India in contributing to stability in the South Asian region... Northeast India which is surrounded by land still has unexploited economic potential. We will promote Bay of Bengal- North East India Industrial value chain concept in cooperation with India & Bangladesh to foster the growth of the entire region: **Japanese PM**

¹⁹ Mayumi Murayama, “Mutual Perspectives of People of Japan and Northeast India during World War II”, in Mayumi Murayama, Sanjoy Hazarika and Preeti Gill, eds, *Northeast India and Japan: Engagement through Connectivity*, Routledge, 2022, pp. 255–275.

²⁰ [The diplomat](#)

Imphal and Kohima during the Second World War.²¹

Japan's infrastructure export policy aligns perfectly with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's 'Make in India' policy as it seeks to be the epicentre of global manufacturing. This necessitates offering world-class infrastructure and improving the investment climate. Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) has been an enabler in advancing quality infrastructure and modernising connectivity within India and beyond. India has been a beneficiary of Japan's EPQI initiative which committed financing of about US\$ 200 billion in 2016 for a period of five years.²²

Prioritising the northeast in the Indo-Japan relationship is the result of political leadership of PM Narendra Modi and former PM Abe Shinzo. India-Japan **ACT EAST FORUM** established in 2017 to promote connectivity initiatives in India's North-east region and extend that to Bangladesh and Myanmar, reflects the larger strategic policy. In contemporary times, Japan holds vital importance due to adoption of a sustainable development approach by Japanese companies suitable to the environmental fragility of these areas.

2. Beyond Economics

Since the signing of the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)** between India-Japan in 2011, trade has become a strong factor in old ties between the two nations. But neither India nor Japan had historically focused on each other but in the energy-climate era they both have shared interest in securing global goods from the 'tragedy of commons'.

This bilateral relationship goes beyond economic linkages and includes skill development, capacity building, and increasing people-to-people contact. The Japanese IRIS program invites students from India's northeast to Japan. India-Japan sustainable development Initiative for the northeast region of India launched last year provides for cooperation in agro-industries, tourism and promoting "**Skill India**".

²¹<https://www.isas.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/ISAS-Insights-No.-556.pdf>

²² "The 'Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure' Initiative Directed toward the G7 Ise-Shima Summit Meeting Announced", Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Japan, 23 May 2016.

In the NER, six out of ten businesses report that obtaining reliable IT infrastructure is difficult because of their location. Such poor state of affairs damages the businesses in these areas and therefore the need arises to bridge the digital divide. **Infrastructure System Overseas Promotion Strategy (2021–2025)**²³ Japan pursues the objective of economic growth through carbon neutrality and digital transformation and converges with NER's demand of digital upliftment.

As India is presiding this year over G20 and also 2023 has been declared as “**International year of Millets**” by UN, this is the right time to bring cooperation between the two geographies on millets. The Embassy of India in Japan organised an event “**Harvesting the Potential: A Millet Celebration**” where State Minister H.E .Mr Takaaki Katsumata highlighted India-Japan cooperation in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and food; efforts towards realising the target of 5 trillion yen investments from Japan to India; and the rising consumption of Millets in Japan. He noted the significance of popularising Millets as food security becomes a major issue for the international community, and in the G7 and G20, where Japan and India are leading efforts to solve global issues.²⁴

New Troika -where lies the convergence between three?

Challenges :

Despite having shared interests, there are several pitfalls that have hampered three countries from cooperating at their full potential and not coming together for the northeastern region's development.

- i. For development, Japanese investment alone is insufficient. The government should consider loosening limits on money coming from Bangladesh and allowing large Indian businesses to invest as well.
- ii. Considering the ecological sensitivity of these regions, sustainable and inclusive development is the only probable option. Industrialisation and urbanisation at the cost of environmental loss is not agreeable to the tribal population of the northeast. Construction of roads and railways, either for the sake of convenience or fulfilling the promises of political manifestos should not make people living there as ‘victims of development’. Communities must be involved in developmental processes and not left to be exploited by private contractors.
- iii. Although in the past few years various security challenges have been addressed, still concerns remain. Recent clashes in Tawang sector of Arunachal Pradesh with PLA (China)

²³ [Japan international cooperation agency \(jica\)](#)

²⁴ [Embassy of Japan](#)

apprehends Chinese presence on the border and thus emphasis must be given to foster cooperation with Bangladesh and Japan in securing the region from external threats.

But the development of the **Matarbari Deep Sea Port in Bangladesh**, with Japanese assistance, is expected to be a game changer for the region. The port will have to cater to the needs of Bangladesh and India's northeast, serving a population of 220 million and connect the landlocked region with the Bay of Bengal.

iv. Both India and Japan are frightened by China's expanding economic and military dominance in the Indian ocean region and its strengthening ties with Bangladesh. This emerging trilateral alliance is being hampered by Indo-Bangla disagreements over China's **Belt and Road Initiative**, of which Bangladesh is a member. Therefore, in order to advance their shared interests and oppose rising Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific region in general and the South China Sea in particular, these three governments must coordinate their approaches.

v. Also, the northeastern region's natural resources and strategic location make it an attractive destination for investors in diverse sectors such as agro-processing, handicrafts, mobile phones, and pharmaceuticals. Despite its vast mineral, land, and water resources, the industrial sector remains underdeveloped. These are mostly the result of a lack of finance and confusing rules and regulatory barriers that allowed corruption to flourish unchecked. Deforestation and pollution resulting from mining are one of the main causes of people's opposition to mining projects.

vi. Due to various domestic or external restrictions and differing priorities, bilateral relations are typically constrained e.g. such as the India-Bangladesh river water conflict, China's growing influence in Bangladesh is a cause of concern for India etc. Whereas multilateral frameworks are generally built on a deeper knowledge of each other's interests and needs in a wider geopolitical context.

Collaboration among India's northeast-Japan-Bangladesh provides landlocked NER access to the Indian ocean, and serves in realising the economic potential of the region. If it gets success in upcoming years, it could further be expanded for development of not just the northeast region but for the whole of India.

Climate change and ecological vulnerability make them a "natural partner" in disaster relief and maritime security. Transferring technology, sharing best practices and training navies is a win-win situation for all.

Policy suggestions and Recommendations:

1. The three governments should have **closer economic cooperation**. Indo-Bangladesh trade was over \$10bn in FY22 with trade balance heavily towards India. When it comes to the northeast, the scenario is completely opposite. Restrictions imposed by Bangladesh on export of goods from NE and high import duty should be reduced. Indian high commissioner to Bangladesh Pranay Verma recently said the proposed comprehensive economic partnership agreement (CEPA) could be a game-changer for both the countries in terms of trade.²⁵ Bilateral trade between India-Japan crossed \$20bn in FY22 due to CEPA signed between them in 2011, but India still has a trade deficit of \$8.2bn. A **Free Trade Agreement** with the three could be a revolutionary decision for the benefit of all and helps in increasing the export market of NER. Resultant increasing economic dependence will prompt them to develop relationships on social, cultural and innovative aspects as well. Other than traditional areas of cooperation, trade and investment in the tourism sector, handicrafts industry and MSME could be the new ventures to turn on.
2. The **policies of governments should be coordinated** in such a way that it not just fulfils their economic objectives but also geo-strategic interests and places them in a favourable position in the Indo-Pacific. Japan- India maritime exercise (JIMEX) could be made a trilateral one by including the Bangladesh navy into it, that is, “JIBMEX” or Bongo sagar (India- Bangladesh naval exercise) could invite the Japanese navy as their maritime partner.
3. **Organic linkages** are the root of any successful relationship in global politics. More steps need to be taken on this front to increase the flow of people between the three countries in sharing ideas, culture and lives. Like Japanese study centres, Bangladeshi textile centres could also be established in India and similarly, NER’s handicrafts centres could be established in both these countries.
4. An **informal annual summit** between the heads of these three Governments could be initiated and if not Heads of the Government then at least a **Foreign minister’s meeting** could pave the way for establishing a Forum of three and hence, improving the cooperation.
5. In the changing nature of the geo-political scenario and with the emergence of various naval powers in the Indo-pacific, this troika could be a ‘**next QUAD**’ - a QUAD for northeast India. It might invite like-minded nations to help shape the future of the Eastern subcontinent, like Bhutan or Nepal.
6. Growing cooperation among New Delhi, Tokyo and Dhaka would reflect a major structural change taking place in the subcontinent and provides much-needed proof that China isn’t the only game in town in terms of regional connectivity. It would also revitalise the role of **India as a net security provider** in the region. There also lies the probability of making it a trilateral security pact like AUKUS.

²⁵ [fibre2fashion](#)

7. A three way pact would offer south asian states more room in **gloeconomic bargaining** and ensuring supply chain resilience.

Conclusion:

The relationship between the three countries has already widened with time, but still many new areas of cooperation are emerging such as maritime security, cybersecurity, defence and ICT(information and communication technology). These ties need to go beyond comprehensive in nurturing their strategic interests and working for the wider international community. Involving business community and civil society could be a win-win situation for all in utilising the unexploited resources and also work in curbing inhumane activities across borders. The benefit out of this troika must be shared equally among the three e.g. like India- japan CEPA, a CEPA of India-bangladesh could also be established. The aim of connecting South Asia with South-East Asia needs cooperative and collaborative leadership and this troika could be a potential choice of leadership.

The special strategic and global partnership between Japan and India, the two largest democracies in Asia, the recently established strategic partnership between Japan and Bangladesh and the development partnership between India and Bangladesh all reflect a convergence of national interests. All three countries support the protection of a free and open Indo-Pacific with shared prosperity through greater regional connectivity.

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