

republic day of India

Partnership a force for prosperity, stability

H.E. Hemant Krishan Singh
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO JAPAN

On the happy occasion of the Republic Day of India, I extend my greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, as well as to the government and friendly people of Japan. I also felicitate my fellow citizens and persons of Indian origin living in Japan.



India-Japan relations have expanded steadily in recent years and entered their most intense phase in modern times. Shared democratic values, economic complementarities and a common strategic vision make the India-Japan partnership a durable force for long-term regional prosperity and stability.

ty in the 21st century.

The Honorable Prime Minister of India, Dr. Manmohan Singh, has paid two visits to Japan in recent months, to attend the G-8 summit in July 2008 and the annual India-Japan summit last October. The major outcomes of these visits have imparted further momentum to bilateral relations by enhancing political and security cooperation, and concretizing initiatives for economic engagement. New India-Japan flagship projects, the Dedicated Freight Corridor (West) and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, are set to transform India's rail transport infrastructure and boost its manufacturing industry. They offer unprecedented opportunities for mutually beneficial business and economic relations between our two countries.

Annual growth of over 9



Indian Prime Minister
Dr. Manmohan Singh



Indian President Pratibha
Devisingh Patil

percent during the past five years, driven mainly by domestic investment and demand, has enabled India to improve the lives of millions of its citizens. India is today infused with the optimism

and exuberance of a youthful population confident of attaining its destiny. As India assumes its rightful place in the international arena, our people can take justifiable pride in their achievements

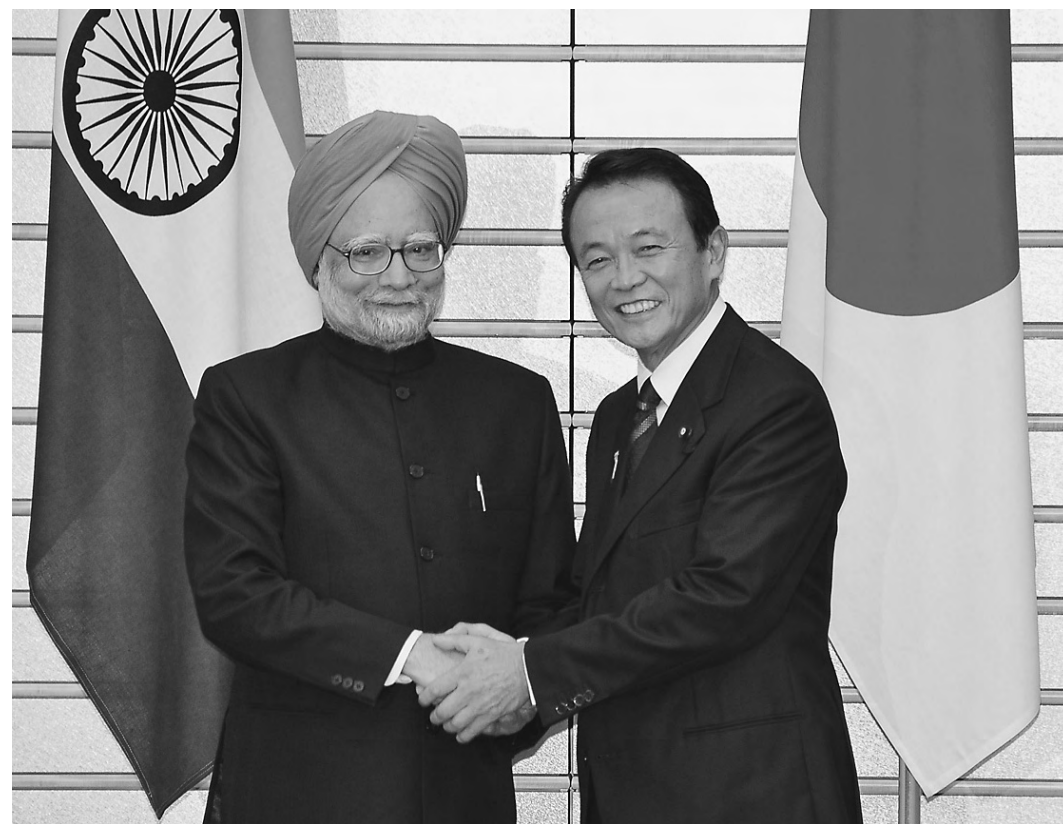
since independence, including in the critical area of science and technology. India's successful lunar mission, Chandrayaan-1, has beamed back 40,000 images of the moon in the two months since its launch.

I take this opportunity to thank the government and people of Japan for expressing their outrage and solidarity with the people of India in the wake of the heinous terrorist attacks in Mumbai last November. These attacks were an assault on our freedom and economic success. It is more imperative than ever for the international community to collectively pursue the fight against terrorism, which is a menace to the entire civilized world.

Asian economies have emerged as the leading factor of global economic growth. Triggered by the financial crisis in the West, the global economy has suffered a major downturn. This poses a serious challenge to our aspirations. India and Japan must draw upon the core strengths of their respective economies to provide stability to domestic markets, and sustain the engine of global growth. India's extensive plans for infrastructure development can provide the stimulus and opportunity for continued regional growth.

2009 will be another landmark year for India in Japan. The new Indian Embassy complex in Tokyo will be inaugurated in the next few months and will be a fitting symbol of India's transformed partnership with Japan. The India Cultural Centre on the Embassy premises will enable our friends in Japan to discover the most valuable soft power asset of India: its immensely rich and diverse culture.

I am confident that the



Annual summit: Prime Minister Taro Aso greets his Indian counterpart Dr. Manmohan Singh prior to their talks in Tokyo on Oct. 22, 2008. INDIAN EMBASSY

coming year will see the further enhancement of the bonds of friendship between India and Japan. We look forward to working closely with the Japanese government, business and industry, and the public at large to realize

the common desire of our two great peoples for universal peace, progress and prosperity.

Economic relations reach new peak

Fuji Mitarai
CHAIRMAN, NIPPON KEIDANREN

On behalf of Nippon Keidanren (the Japan Business Federation), I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 59th anniversary of India's Republic Day.



The relationship between Japan and India can be traced back to the introduction of Buddhism to Japan in the sixth century. Japan has since assimilated

other aspects of India's bountiful culture, such as its philosophy, and one can see how these have become a part of daily Japanese life. For instance, the first Japanese syllabary learned by children in elementary school was inspired by Sanskrit. Since India's independence, our nations have forged a fine relationship as partners who share such common values as democracy and the rule of law.

The economic relationship between Japan and India has grown much stronger in recent years. In 2007, the value of bilateral trade reached ¥1.214 trillion, up 22.6 percent from the previous year, and at ¥178 billion, Japanese direct investment to India was three times that of 2006. Furthermore, the number of Japanese companies operating in India has doubled over

a three-year period, climbing to 840 as of October 2008.

Against this background, strengthening cooperation between business sectors in the two countries is increasingly important. On the occasion of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh's visit to Japan in October 2008, Nippon Keidanren held the second Japan-India Business Leaders Forum to discuss the various challenges to improving bilateral economic relations, and to address such global issues as economic turmoil, climate change, energy conservation and the food supply.

The forum provided the opportunity for candid dialogue aimed at consolidating the economic relationship between Japan and India. In the face of the global economic slowdown, we shared the per-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

Influence of relationship transcends bilateral borders

Yoshiro Mori
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-INDIA ASSOCIATION

On the occasion of the 59th anniversary of the Republic Day of India, I wish to convey to the government and people of India the warmest congratulations of all the members of the Japan-India Association, which I represent.



I am gratified to note that the last year has witnessed the increasing weight of India in international society as well as the further development of our bilateral relationship in all its

aspects. Dr. Manmohan Singh, prime minister of India, visited Japan twice, for the Toyako G-8 summit in July and in a bilateral context in October.

The past year, however, highlighted India due to two major events: the terrorist attacks in Mumbai and the economic "tsunami" started by the American financial meltdown, which has had an exceptionally negative impact on the otherwise robust economies of India and Japan.

I am, though, strongly optimistic about India's ability to overcome the serious post-Mumbai consequences and, about the recovery of our economies as I believe in the wisdom and determination of our

two peoples.

On the bilateral front, I expect the early conclusion of the Japan-India Economic Partnership Agreement now under negotiation and the advancement of two great projects, among others: the constructions of the Dedicated Freight Corridor and the Industrial Corridor between New Delhi and Mumbai. Many Japanese companies are contemplating or have implemented investment projects in various parts of India.

Increasing numbers of Indian IT engineers and other business people visit and stay in Japan. Cooperation in science and technology is gaining momentum. Cultural exchanges

between the two countries are expanding and deepening after the Japan-India Cultural Exchange Year of 2007-08. Indian restaurants are mushrooming in major cities in Japan.

The Japan-India Association, with its historical sense of mission and spirit of dedication, is determined not to spare any effort for the further betterment of our very important relationship.

Let me pray that the excellent Japan-India relationship brings more happiness to our two peoples, and that the two nations contribute to the peace and prosperity of the international community at large.

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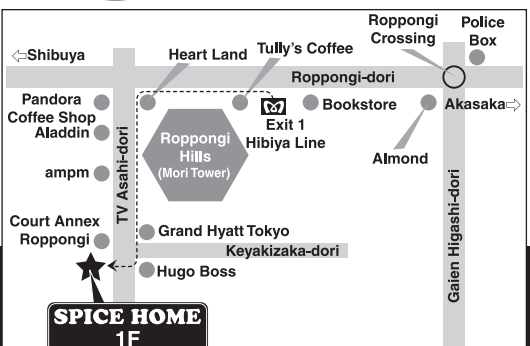
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Shared interests, values

Taro Nakayama
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-INDIA
PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP
LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League, I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations on the 59th anniversary of India's Republic Day.



It is a great pleasure to see shared interests and common values between Japan and India, such as those related to democracy, human rights and market economy, continue to foster friendly relations between our two nations, which originate from long historical ties.

I am grateful to note that the relationship between Japan and India has been strengthened through active exchanges, primarily annual and mutual visits by the prime

ministers of both countries. In particular, the successful visit of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh to Japan in October 2008 proved to be a landmark in recent bilateral relations. During this visit, the leaders of the two countries signed the "Joint Statement on the Advancement of the Strategic and Global Partnership between Japan and India," which promotes cooperation in a wide range of fields, and the "Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation between Japan and India," which relates to security cooperation between the two nations.

On behalf of the Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League, I would like to express our continuing commitment to actively contribute to the further strengthening of our partnership.

I send my best wishes to the people of India for their further prosperity and for the continued development of our cordial relationship.



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Driving regional, global economies

Nobuo Ohashi
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-INDIA BUSINESS
COOPERATION COMMITTEE

On behalf of the Japan-India Business Cooperation Committee (JIBCC), I wish to offer my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 59th anniversary of India's Republic Day.



Having gained its independence in 1947, India promulgated its modern constitution on this day in 1950 and over the succeeding 60 years has established its political record as a major constitutional democracy. Under the leadership of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and with the support of a stable political climate, India has become an instrumental player in world affairs and in recent years has demonstrated a pace of economic progress that is nothing short of stunning. Economic

ties between Japan and India have been marked by impressive and extended growth in trade and investment, and the future of our bilateral relationship in this area appears bright. However, the effects of the global financial crisis that materialized in mid-2008 seem to have introduced a brief pause.

To offset the impact of the financial crisis, India has pursued a flexible response, launching economic stimulus initiatives in December and announcing Jan. 2 a second set of stimulus measures. I am confident the speedy fiscal outlays and financial policies implemented by your government will be effective, and help to bring about an early economic recovery. Thanks to its economic initiatives, India is expected to post economic growth of 7 percent this fiscal year. Furthermore, India has assumed a growing presence in Asian and world economic affairs, and hopes are that it will increasingly serve as a lo-

comotive force driving the global economy. At the same time, we look forward to seeing India contribute significantly to the battle against global warming and the creation of a framework for the promotion of free trade in the spirit of the WTO.

Turning to coming political developments this year, India is scheduled to hold a general election in May and Japan plans to hold a Lower House election by autumn, although the exact date has yet to be finalized. Bilateral relations between India and Japan have withstood the test of time despite past difficulties and even with changes of government in periods of economic turbulence. The JIBCC firmly believes that our two countries should endeavor to strengthen their ties as true partners especially during tough economic times. In particular, we believe the conclusion of a bilateral economic partnership agreement will be absolutely essential to the achievement of improved economic ties and urge that such an agreement be signed at an early date.

In closing, let me repeat my congratulations on the 59th anniversary of your Republic Day. May this auspicious occasion contribute to the advancement of bilateral ties between our two countries.

Unity fuels growth, progress

Yog Kapoor
OWNER, SAMRAT INDIAN RESTAURANT
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On the happy occasion of this 59th anniversary of the Republic Day of India, I feel as an Indian that we are very lucky to be feting this great day, which is all due to the blessing of our great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and other patriots who sacrificed their lives to achieve a day of great celebration for Indians the world over.



The heads of government uphold the vision and responsibility for creating a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future for the region, and the international community under the principles of openness, transparency, mutual trust, common interest and respect for our diverse cultures.

We all should share the view that it is necessary to strengthen cooperation to cope with the challenges faced

by the world, especially in these troubling economic times.

Mahatma Gandhi taught us nonviolence and unity. Violence only brings more violence, misery and poverty, wherever we are born in India, in the north or south, east or west. Whatever religion we follow, whatever language we speak, we should not divide ourselves with religion or caste, or region or language. We are "INDIANS"; we are all one.

India has tremendous manpower reserves and the country is blessed with many natural resources. Today the whole world is watching us with great hopes and expectations because we are a hard-working and trustworthy nation.

So today we should forget our differences, and work together for the sake of peace and prosperity for the country, and for the whole world, so that our future generations will be able to celebrate such a great day with pride, prosperity and peace.

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

ception that further efforts should be made to liberalize trade and investment, and to build a global legal and institutional framework for that purpose. We also shared the expectation that our governments will make persistent and concerted efforts for the prompt conclusion of a comprehensive economic partnership agreement to further accelerate and consolidate business activities. Japanese cooperation with efforts to develop India's infrastructure, such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) project, was roundly welcomed as invaluable in furthering the development of the country's economy and industry.

The global economic downturn, which was brought about by uncertainty in the financial system, is affecting both our countries. However, I believe that even amid this serious situation, our economic relationship — which is rich in potential — will be strengthened, and that Japan and India can contribute to sustainable economic development in Asia, and the world through joint initiatives in the aforementioned areas.

Finally, I sincerely wish India and its people peace and prosperity on the auspicious occasion of the 59th anniversary of Republic Day. I will make the utmost efforts to enhance economic relations between our two nations, in order that the future we share may be a bright and fruitful one.