

Republic Day of India Special

Strong commitment to Indo-Pacific stability and prosperity

SIBI GEORGE
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA



On the occasion of India's 75th Republic Day, I extend my warm greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako and to the government and people of Japan. I also take this opportunity to convey special greetings to my fellow Indian nationals and friends of India in Japan who are important stakeholders in the progressive India-Japan special strategic and global partnership.

The celebration of this joyous occasion coincides with the 10th year of the elevation of India-Japan relations to a special strategic and global partnership by the Honorable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi and the Honorable then-Prime

Minister of Japan Shinzo Abe. In recent years, this partnership has been reinforced under the leadership of Modi and Prime Minister Fumio Kishida.

The past year has been significant for both India and Japan as chairs of two key international groupings — the Group of 20 and the Group of Seven. It was a year filled with multiple high-level engagements involving the leading rich and developing nations.

Our prime ministers met three times in 2023 — in March in New Delhi, in May during the G7 summit in Hiroshima, and in September at the G20 summit in New Delhi. The Honorable former Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga also visited India in July, leading a major parliamentary and business delegation and meeting with Modi. All these engagements were crucial in reaffirming our special strategic and global partnership and in setting a road map for us to realize the full potential of our bilateral relations.

In 2023, India held two Voice of Global

South Summits to share the perspectives and priorities of the nations in that grouping on a common platform.

India, through its G20 presidency, also embodied the spirit of universal brotherhood through the mantra of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, reflected in the theme of "One Earth, One Family, One Future."

India's G20 presidency strived for just and equitable growth for all in the world by sharing our strengths and experiences to address global challenges such as food, fuel, fertilizer, energy and climate change. This vision culminated in the inclusion of the African Union in the G20, and in the historic G20 New Delhi Leaders' Declaration. In our deep and multifaceted partnership, strategic aspects have gained new importance in today's increasingly complex geopolitical environment, which is reflected in our frequent bilateral and multilateral engagements. The 15th round of the Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue was held in New Delhi in July and the first Joint

Service Staff Talks were held in Tokyo in September. Bilateral exercises held in 2023, such as Veer Guardian and Dharma Guardian, also played a crucial role in strengthening defense cooperation and enhancing interoperability between our armed forces.

India envisions a free, open and inclusive Indo-Pacific, based on the principle of Security and Growth for All in the Region, and through the Indo-Pacific Oceans' Initiative of India's prime minister. Japan's vision for the Indo-Pacific was articulated through a speech by Kishida titled "The Future of the Indo-Pacific — Japan's New Plan for a 'Free and Open Indo-Pacific' — Together with India, as an Indispensable Partner" during his visit in March 2023. As members of "the Quad," Japan and India are committed to rule of law and working toward the peace, stability and prosperity of an inclusive Indo-Pacific region, with no change to the status quo.

Japan is a natural partner in India's economic transformation. The shared commitment to realize ¥5 trillion in investment over the next five years underpins our commitment to mutual economic growth and development, for us and the region. There is immense potential for both India and Japan to collaborate on economic security and growth through established platforms like the India-Japan comprehensive economic and partnership agreement, Supply Chain Resilience Initiative, Industrial Competitiveness Partnership, India-Japan Digital Partnership, Clean Energy Partnership and Semiconductor Supply Chain Partnership. Japan has been an indispensable partner in India's infrastructure development with many iconic projects, including the flagship Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Railway Project and the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link Project. The complementarities between the skilled human resources of India and the demands of the Japanese economy are being leveraged for mutual growth.

India's commitment to fighting climate change is unwavering. India has set for



President Droupadi Murmu



Prime Minister Narendra Modi

itself the ambitious target of taking its non-fossil fuel energy capacity to 500 gigawatts by 2030. The push for renewables domestically has been matched by India's call for a global solar grid through the International Solar Alliance, of which Japan is a member.

With an annual per capita carbon footprint much below the global average, India is further focusing on mindful use of resources by individuals through the Lifestyle For Environment initiative. Sustainable ways of living have been a common part of both Indian and Japanese traditions. India follows a policy of being the first responder in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief globally, and Japan is a key member of the India-led Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure, which has grown in importance in the face of increasing climate challenges. India's focus on global food security is reflected in the promotion of traditional Indian millets, which are dense in nutrients, climate-resilient and resource-efficient.

India and Japan celebrated 2023 as the India-Japan Year of Tourism Exchange to increase people-to-people contacts and strengthen the cultural connections between our countries. We will be building on the success of this initiative by celebrating 2024 as the India-Japan Year of Tourism 2.0, under the theme of "Connecting Himalayas with Mount Fuji," as well as the India-Japan Year of Science and Innovation.

As the fastest growing large economy, India has entered its Amrit Kaal, or golden age, a 25-year period till 2047, the 100th year of Indian independence, with a vision of faster growth and prosperity. Japan has been a valued partner of India on this journey, and I am confident that the India-Japan partnership will continue to strengthen and prosper in a safe, secure and a sustainable world. I would like to conclude by thanking the vibrant Indian diaspora in Japan, which is playing an important role in further strengthening our long-standing dynamic partnership with Japan.

Facing global challenges as steady partners

YOSHIHIDE SUGA
CHAIRPERSON, THE JAPAN-INDIA ASSOCIATION



As chairman of the Japan-India Association, I am delighted to offer my heartfelt congratulations on the 75th anniversary of the Republic Day of India. This landmark year, 2024, which is the Year of the Dragon, symbolizes a time of great significance and hope for both our countries.

In much of Asia, the Year of the Dragon stands for ambition and growth. The

dragon, revered for its power to soar through the skies, embodies our aspirations for progress and prosperity. This emblematic year aligns perfectly with the celebration of India's remarkable journey over 75 years of independence.

Both Japan and India have finally begun to emerge from the shadow of the COVID-19 pandemic. India continues to forecast robust economic growth, while Japan is starting to see promising prospects in its economic outlook this year. This recovery sets a hopeful backdrop for our continued collaboration.

As steadfast partners, Japan and India jointly face various global challenges, including the unilateral change of the status quo by force and the use of economic

power for coercive pressure. Our unity and cooperation in these challenges underscore a shared commitment to the peace and stability of the world.

Our roles last year as chair countries of the Group of Seven and Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations placed us at the forefront of addressing global issues. Japan and India are the major democracies in Asia and are expected to continue strengthening their collaboration even further this year.

As we mark this significant milestone, let us renew our dedication to a future of shared prosperity and partnership. This year, may our nations continue to rise and advance together, embodying the strength and resilience of the dragon in our enduring friendship.





RAJESH KHULLAR
CEO, YOUNG GUNS GROUP



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Republic Day of India Special



Left: The Kailasa temple is the largest structure in the Ellora Caves complex, a multireligious UNESCO World Heritage Site in Maharashtra, India. Right: Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveils a bust of Mahatma Gandhi in Hiroshima in May 2023. EMBASSY OF INDIA

Long-term supporter of bilateral investment

RYUKO HIRA
CHAIRMAN, THE INDIAN COMMERCE
AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION JAPAN



On the 75th Independence Day in 2021, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared his vision for India.

"Our goal is to develop a nation where we not only have the world-class

infrastructure, but also move ahead with the mantra of 'Minimum government, Maximum governance'... working towards becoming a 'Viksit Bharat' (blossomed and unfolded India) by 2047."

As one of the steps toward that goal, he implemented the Amrit Mahotsav of Independence for 75 weeks through Aug. 15, 2023.

Today, India's network of national highway spans 145,000 kilometers, making it the second-largest in the world after the U.S., and its university count is the highest in Asia.

India ranks third globally in terms of start-up ecosystems, having increased gross expenditure on research and development more than three times in the last few years and boasting over 500,000 R&D personnel.

In the last eight years, women's partici-

pation in extramural R&D has doubled, with India ranked third in 2023 in Ph.D.s awarded in science and engineering, trailing only the U.S. and China.

Additionally, India saw its highest number of patents granted last year, with the patent office registering 41,010 through Nov. 15, 2023.

In its bid to host the 2036 Summer Olympics, the cricket stadium in Ahmedabad was rebuilt to accommodate 130,000 people, making it one of the largest in the world. A plan was also drawn up for the construction of a 6.3 billion-rupee (about ¥10 billion) sports complex on an 11-hectare site near the stadium that will include tennis courts, a swimming pool, indoor arenas and other facilities.

While supporting innovation and digital technology, there is a consistent emphasis on adopting a human-centered approach as expressed by *Vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (the world is one family), a concept that was conveyed when India chaired the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations, particularly among members of the "global south."

Millions of Indian farmers have embraced natural farming. This is to protect human health and the health of the soil and the Earth. India has also launched the National Green Hydrogen Mission to boost green hydrogen production, as well as the Deep Ocean Mission to explore the

unlimited possibilities of maritime mineral wealth and thermal energy.

What exists behind these achievements? What is the secret, philosophy and strategy of India?

India embraces numerous saints from the medieval era who built the foundations of renunciation and detachment, sacrificing short-term, transient goals for long-term or eternal happiness and prosperity. In 2023, Modi said: "In the south, there were saints like Alvar and scholars like Ramanujacharya! In the north, there were saints like Tulsidas, Kabir, Ravidas and Surdas! In Punjab, there was Guru Nanak Dev. In the east, saints like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu in Bengal still radiate their light globally. In the west, in Gujarat, there were saints like Narsinh Mehta. In Maharashtra, there were saints like Tukaram and Namdev."

Dedication to the country and the efforts of cultivation and striving toward a great purpose are deeply rooted in this land of Bharata, thanks to the many saints.

The Indian Commerce and Industry Association Japan, having celebrated its 100th anniversary, serves as an apex body to provide support, guidance and advisory services to all interested parties, enabling them to fully develop the economic and investment potential between Japan and India. On behalf of all ICIJ members, I convey our deepest appreciation to readers of The Japan Times.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi poses with Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Indian President Droupadi Murmu and Yukio Kishida at the G20 summit in New Delhi in September 2023. OFFICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER

Sharing the values of freedom, democracy and peace

YASUTOSHI NISHIMURA
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-INDIA
PARLIAMENTARY FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE
AND MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES



As chairman of the Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League and a member of the House of Representatives, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to the people of

India on the occasion of their 75th Republic Day.

Japan and India established diplomatic ties in 1952. With a long history of warm

exchanges, we have successfully constructed a highly cordial relationship that has deepened even further in recent years.

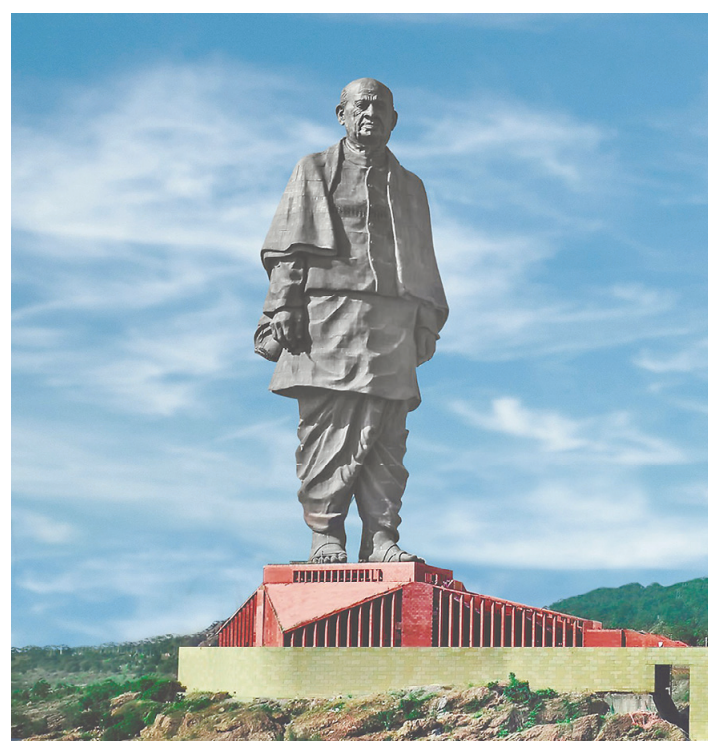
In an increasingly complex global situation, the cooperative relationship between Japan and India, which share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy and peace, has become even more important. With Japan and India having held the presidencies of the Group of Seven and Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations last year, our two countries are further collaborating and leading the international community together.

After contributing to the development of the bilateral relationship between our countries over 20 years, I became chairman of the Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League last year. I visited New

Delhi and Goa to participate in the G20 energy ministers meeting, the India-Japan DeepTech Innovation & Clean Energy Seminar, and other events last July. I am convinced that the relationship between Japan and India will remain robust, and as head of the Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League, I continue to strengthen this relationship by stimulating exchanges between the parliaments of both countries.

I would like to conclude my message by expressing my sincere wishes for the further prosperity of your country and the well-being of all in India.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Left: The 182-meter Statue of Unity, the tallest statue in the world, stands in Gujarat, India. Right: A beach on Kadmat Island INCRECIBLE INDIA



Wishing you a Happy Republic Day



26th January
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to the people of
the Republic of India
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