

India independence day

Proud of significant progress made in many areas

Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA

On the occasion of the 69th Independence Day of India, I convey my respects to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and to the government and the warm and friendly people of Japan. I also take this opportunity to underline the firm commitment to further deepen and expand the special strategic and global partnership that binds our two countries.



This is a day of celebration tempered with deep introspection for Indians around the world, including those who have made Japan their home, as we reflect on the sacrifices of the great men and women who worked courageously for our freedom and wonder whether we have, as a nation, advanced to realize their hopes and dreams.

As we embarked on our journey as an independent nation almost seven decades ago, there were many who questioned the choices we made, including the nature of our polity with universal suffrage, given widespread underdevelopment and the immense diversity in our country. Indeed, there is no other country that weaves together such a diverse mosaic of ethnicities, languages, dialects, religions and ways of life.

We have reason to be justifiably proud of our progress so far on all these fronts. India has guaranteed fundamental rights to all its citizens and is today the largest functioning democracy in the world; it has become the third-largest economy in the world in purchasing power parity terms, moving from an economy of insufficiencies to one of sur-

pluses, and stands poised to become the fastest-growing large economy this year. And the quality of life of its citizens, which is the litmus test of progress, has improved significantly. Literacy levels, which were at 10 percent in 1947, are over 75 percent today and the average life expectancy, which was 32 years in 1947, is 65 today. Symbolic of India's long journey to progress since Independence from British rule is its emergence as a space power capable of launching satellites and sending a mission to Mars. Most recently, in July, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched five satellites for the United Kingdom.

A country is judged today also by the status of its women and it is here that facts and figures tell a compelling story. Gender equality, enshrined in our constitution, has been both the inspiration and stimulus for legislation, policies and strategies for the political and economic empowerment and advancement of women, with improvement of social and physical infrastructure as a priority. Thus, there is a slew of legislation to provide women with an equal, secure and enabling environment and statistics show that results are at hand. Female fertility rates have fallen from over six in 1947 to two-and-a-half in 2015; maternal mortality rates have fallen from 2,000 per 100,000 births in 1947 to 117 in 2015; literacy levels from 9 percent, yes 9 percent, in 1947 to 70 percent in 2015.

The government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who took office last May, was elected on a platform pledging good governance and development. The past year has been marked with measures taken to realize the high expectations of the electorate. Nationwide campaigns have been launched to focus collec-



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi

and services tax system is proposed to be rolled out by next April. Foreign investment limits have been substantially relaxed in many sectors.

The economy is in good shape as acknowledged by Christine Lagarde, managing director of the IMF, herself, who has called "India a bright spot on the cloudy global horizon." Inflation is under control. The mid-term fiscal outlook is healthy with gradual rationalization of subsidies, augmentation of resources through auctioning of coal and spectrum, and expanding and improving efficiency through larger public outlays, including in the power sector. Targeted insurance plans and new pension plans are providing the framework for a more responsive socially inclusive system focusing on the underprivileged. Jan Dhan to ensure access to financial services to the poorest of the

poor, and leveraging of technology to assure delivery of programs are already enabling a faster pace of financial inclusion while improving the effectiveness of government supported initiatives.

Insofar as Japan-India relations are concerned, with stable proactive governments in both countries, there is a unique opportunity to fast track the transformation of our relations. We had a very successful visit of Prime Minister Modi to Japan last August and September — his first visit outside India's immediate neighborhood to reaffirm the importance of our partnership based on shared values, strategic convergence and the immense potential for economic partnership. There was also recognition of common stakes in promoting peace, stability and prosperity across Asia and beyond.



President of India Pranab Mukherjee

Our prime ministers up-

graded our relations to a special strategic and global partnership. There was agreement to further strengthen strategic, security and defence cooperation. They also announced the India-Japan Investment Promotion Partnership with Abe convey-

ing the intention to realize about ¥3.5 trillion of public and private investment and financing from Japan and doubling the number of Japanese companies in India over the coming five years.

Japanese companies' search for markets abroad and their excellence in manufacturing and innovation, when coupled with Prime Minister Modi's "Make in India" initiative, which aims to promote manufacturing and increase its share of GDP to 25 percent by 2022, offers significant economic opportunities for both sides. India is already becoming a manufacturing hub for Japanese companies in the automobile sector and we hope this trend will extend to other sectors. Japanese companies have started tapping not only the domestic Indian market, but also its geographical position as a springboard for exports to the ASEAN, Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

Bilateral political and functional exchanges continue to be robust with ministerial visits and meetings of institutionalized dialogue mechanisms. There are steady exchanges in S&T, education, culture, tourism and people-to-people contacts. The year-long Festival of India in Japan

launched last October has brought dance troupes, an exhibition of Indian Buddhist art, literary exchanges, a food festival and a Buddhist delegation to the people of Japan. The Indian Buddhist Sculptures Exhibition at Tokyo National Museum drew over 100,000 people. Over 12,000 people in Japan participated in events to celebrate the first International Day of Yoga on June 21 this year. Saichiro Misumi, the 99-year-old former managing director of the Japan-India Association, was conferred the prestigious Padma Bhushan Award in New Delhi in March by the President of India, Pranab Mukherjee, for his contribution to India-Japan relations for almost seven decades, showing that India holds those who have promoted relations between our countries in the highest esteem.

I firmly believe that the excellent relations between India and Japan will be further deepened and expanded in times ahead, bringing our two countries and people together. I look forward to working closely with the Japanese government, parliamentarians, industry, academia and other institutions to usher in a golden period in our relationship.

Strong cooperation across wide range of fields

Katsuya Okada and Yasutoshi Nishimura
VICE PRESIDENT AND SECRETARY GENERAL, JAPAN-INDIA PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

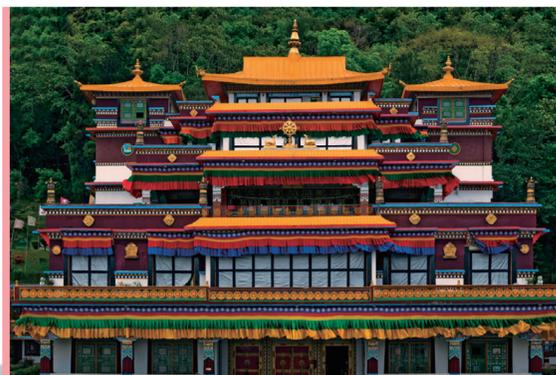
On behalf of the Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League, we would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of the Republic of India on the occasion of the 68th Anniversary of India's Independence Day.

Japan and India, sharing common values such as democracy, the rule of law and human rights, have long maintained and developed a friendly relationship. Our bilateral relations have progressed greatly, sharing

wide-ranging strategic and economic interests more and more in recent years.

Last year, His Excellency Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited Japan and our bilateral relations were upgraded to a special strategic and global partnership. It is genuine pleasure to witness the remarkable progress of cooperation in a wide range of areas such as economy, security, culture and people-to-people exchanges.

On this auspicious day, we would like to send our best wishes for the happiness and further prosperity of the people of India and for the continued development of our cordial relationship.



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India independence day

Working to grow relationship

Yoshiro Mori
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN INDIA
ASSOCIATION

On the occasion of India's 69th Independence Day, I am honored to extend my sincere congratulations to the government and the people of India as chairman of the Japan-India Association.



The Japan-India relationship is rapidly developing thanks to strong efforts made by government officials and people on both sides. The visit by Prime Minister of India H.E. Narendra Modi to Japan from the end of last August to early September added another important milestone in our already excellent relationship.

Since Modi took the reins of India last year, the Japan-India relationship has definitely ben-

efited from one of his new diplomatic priorities, "Act East." To my understanding, this initiative was meant to upgrade the "Look East" policy of former administrations by introducing a more proactive stance in India's foreign policy with East Asian countries. It is my hope that this new policy orientation will further promote India's engagement in East Asia, an area of prosperity facing some uncertainties. This new initiative is welcomed by our region and should benefit both India and her Asian friends.

In addition to excellent political relations, bilateral economic cooperation symbolized by large infrastructure projects such as the Dedicated Freight Corridor (DFC) and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor (DMIC) are ever developing. The Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) adds another dimension to our relations in the sense that the governments and business

communities of both our countries encourage such engagement in South India. Moreover, a feasibility study concerning the construction of the Mumbai-Ahmadabad high-speed railway was completed.

India continues to be the largest recipient of official development assistance (ODA) from Japan. In addition to the large-scale projects mentioned above, various infrastructure projects, including electricity and urban transportation, poverty eradication, human resources development, and environmental projects such as tree planting and water supply and sewerage systems, have been promoted by Japanese traditional ODA. Among others, the Delhi Metro Project is the most successful story of Japanese ODA in India, so much so that similar metro systems are being built in cities such as Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad and Kolkata with financial and technological support from

Japan.

The presence of Japanese companies in India continues to rise, with over 1,200 companies there today. Their presence is remarkably increasing along Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor and in some of pro-business states of southern India.

At the same time, an increasing number of Indian companies are establishing their offices in Tokyo, Osaka, Kobe and Yokohama. Over 20,000 Indian individuals live in Japan and Indian restaurants are popping up in many places.

The Japan-India Association celebrates its 112th anniversary this year. As the oldest and the most trusted private friendship organization engaged in Japan-India relations, we are determined to deploy our efforts to promote Japan-India relations.

In conclusion, I would like to use this auspicious occasion to again convey our best wishes to the government and people of India.

Japanese businesses, investments continue to increase

Masami Iijima
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-INDIA BUSINESS CO-
OPERATION COMMITTEE



On behalf of the Japan-India Business Cooperation Committee (JIBCC), I would like to offer sincere congratulations on the occasion of the 69th Independence Day of India.

Japan and India have built amicable relations as two of Asia's largest democracies for many years, and since the establishment of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government, the enhancement of bilateral economic relations has become a particularly important theme. Last September, during Modi's visit to Japan, the target of "doubling Japan's foreign direct investment and the number of Japanese companies in India within five years" was set with

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, and cooperation between the two governments to achieve this target has been confirmed. In addition, in April, a joint statement was signed by Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Yoichi Miyazawa, and India's Minister of State for Commerce and Industry, Nirmala Sitharaman. Matters addressed in the statement included the development of 11 Japan Industrial Townships in India.

Meanwhile, in addition to these developments, the number of Japanese companies in India reached 1,209 in October 2014, a considerable increase from the 1,072 in 2013, and new large-scale investments have been recently announced. The Indian economy shows an upward trend, as can be seen in the IMF's prediction that Indian economic growth in 2015 will reach 7.5 percent. With the increase of business momentum in India, an acceleration in the pace

of penetration for Japanese companies is expected.

The JIBCC was established in 1966 to enhance mutual understanding and friendship while facilitating economic relations between Japan and India. This year's meeting in Tokyo is the 40th regularly held joint meeting with the India-Japan Business Cooperation Committee. Modi is actively inviting foreign investment under the "Make in India" initiative program, and we will deal with related challenges and prospects as topics of particular focus during the upcoming joint meeting. The JIBCC hopes to contribute to the further development of business between the two countries through an animated discussion.

I will conclude by once again offering my congratulations for the 69th Independence Day of India, and my best wishes for India's increasing development and prosperity in the future.

Japan's role in India's drive for independence

Ryuko Hira
PRESIDENT OF ICIJ, INSTITUTE OF
SATHYA SAI EDUCATION

In his first press conference in Tokyo on June 19, 1943, the prominent nationalist of the Indian Independence movement Ne-



taji Subhas Chandra Bose said: "India and Japan have in the past been bound by deep cultural ties that are about 20 centuries old. Recently, these ties have been interrupted because of the British domination of India. However, it is certain that once India is free these ties will be revived and strengthened." Today, these words seem truly prophetic. In that press confer-

ence he also mentioned that Japan's victory over Russia in 1905 had made Indians proud. They looked upon Japan as a defender of Asian dignity.

Between 1943 and 1945, Bose's relations with Japan became very close. In Berlin, Bose was already in touch with the Japanese Embassy. However, we witness the bonding with Japan when he was transferred to a Japanese submarine from a German one on April 28, 1943 in the Indian Ocean. He reached Sabang on the coast of Sumatra on May 6, 1943. In a message on a photograph with the crew he wrote, "... this will mark a milestone in our fight for victory and peace."

Arriving in Tokyo, Bose met several senior officials, including Prime Minister Hideki Tojo on June 10, 1943, and "the magic

of Bose enchanted Tojo immediately." There was something in his personality and passionate devotion to India's cause that impressed Tojo. Bose asked him two very pointed questions: "Was Japan prepared to help India's freedom struggle unconditionally?" and "Was Japan ready to take the war to Indian soil?" The answer to the first was clear in a speech by Tojo in special Diet session on June 16. He declared, "We firmly resolve that Japan will do everything possible to help Indian independence. I am convinced the day of Indian freedom and prosperity is not far off..." However, an answer to the second question needed input from military experts and an immediate answer was not possible.

On July 5 Bose took charge of the Indian National Army (INA) in Singapore and declared it was the proudest day of his life to announce that India's army of liberation had come into being. "If you follow in life, as well as in death, I will lead you to victory and freedom" he promised his

followers. The next day Tojo arrived in Singapore and, in a display of the Japan-India alliance, stood beside Bose reviewing the INA parade.

The proclamation of the Provisional Government of Free India (Azad Hind) took place on Oct. 21, 1943. Bose and his cabinet took the oath of allegiance to the Azad Hind government and vowed to fight until independence was won. Japan was the first of nine countries to grant recognition to Free India in exile.

Soon after, Bose left for Tokyo to attend the Greater East Asia Conference. Since India did not belong to the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, he was an observer.

He made a forceful speech and said: "Your excellency, this is not a conference for dividing the spoils among the conquerors. This is not a conference for hatching a conspiracy to victimize a weak power... this is an assembly of liberated nations, an assembly that is out to create a new order in this part of the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



Above: A painting by Sayam Bharath Yadav; Right: A portrait of a woman by Bairu Raghuram EMBASSY OF INDIA

Artwork collection celebrates best of Indian art and culture

An exhibition of Indian contemporary art and culture is ongoing in Tokyo through Aug. 24.

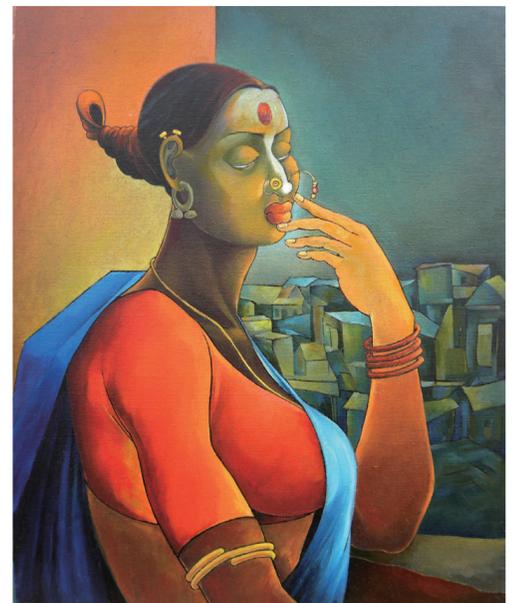
Co-organized by the Embassy of India in Tokyo, Telangana Art Trust (art@telangana) and Nihonbashi Mitsukoshi Main Store, this exhibition brings together four eminent Indian artists from Telangana and two Japanese artists for an Artists in Residence program. They worked together from Aug. 12 to 14 and their creations are on display at the Mitsukoshi store through Aug. 24.

The participating artists are: Bairu Raghuram, a renowned Hyderabad artist, who creates

and recreates rural settings of Telangana with his mastery of drawings and etchings in a crosshatching technique. His approach to the subject matter is very similar to his contemporaries, but his technique makes him distinctive.

Surya Prakash is considered one of India's important painters and his contribution to the development of art of Hyderabad is immense. Widely known for his entrancing depictions of lotus ponds, Prakash absorbed the colorist emotional response toward nature.

Aelay Laxman is highly regarded for his contemporary depictions of rural Telangana



imagery. Laxman's vibrant quasi-realistic paintings evoke a sense of apprehension and nostalgia.

The semi-abstract predisposition of Sayam Bharath Yadav's paintings is rather subdued by the powerful mass of contours and the remarkable expressions of the dynamic figures. The figures are essentially silhouettes of buffaloes. He portrays the animals as they try to under-

stand the quandary and the susceptibility in the context of urbanization.

Telangana Art Trust has also released a book on 150 artists and about 100 years of art history in Telangana. The book was launched by Ambassador of India Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa at Mitsukoshi on Aug. 14.

The trust wants to provide a free copy of the book to art galleries in Tokyo. Those interested may contact Vivekananda Cultural Centre, Tokyo at culsec@indembassy-tokyo.gov.in.

Also, two Japanese artists Yuriko Lochan and Masato Yanagisawa are participating in the exhibition.

During the event, *biryani* (an Indian mixed rice dish) and *lassi* (a popular, traditional, yogurt-based drink from India) will be served at the venue. There will also be traditional Indian dance performances.

The Indian Art and Culture Festa takes place at the Hajimarinno Café on the seventh floor of Nihonbashi Mitsukoshi Main Store through Aug. 24. Open daily from 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Closed Aug. 18. For more information, call the venue at 03-3274-8843.

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India independence day



Mahatma Gandhi (left) and Subhas Chandra Bose (third from left) attend the Indian National Congress in 1938 in Haripura in the Surat district of Gujarat, India. WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Lasting bond between nations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

world." To the Japanese people he said: "Your names will go down in history not merely as makers of a new Nippon, not merely as makers of a new East Asia, but as the makers and the architects of a new world."

Tojo announced the transfer of Andaman and Nicobar islands to Free India in spite of reservations by the Japanese Navy. Bose had declared he would be on Indian soil before the end of the year and arrived on the islands on Dec. 30, 1943.

Bose stayed with the Shibusawa family — known for their contributions in shaping Japanese economic policy since the late 19th century — during his late 1943 trip to Japan. Bose left an unforgettable impression with them and in Japan not only as a patriot and statesman, but also as a human being.

If Bose had arrived in Singapore in 1942, history may have been different. One precious year was lost in Europe and the decision to launch the Imphal offensive was slow, with the final order from Tojo coming in December.

The INA entered India on March 18, 1944 and made several important gains, but despite the heroism of INA soldiers, the Imphal campaign ended in disaster. The supply lines across Burma snapped and the monsoons arrived early. Anglo-American airpower maintained a relentless bombing campaign. In July the

retreat order came and Bose was deeply saddened when he heard about the suffering of the retreating men.

On his last visit to Tokyo in November 1944 he met the new Prime Minister Kuniaki Koiso. At a huge meeting in Hibiya Hall Bose pledged that Japan and India would continue to fight shoulder to shoulder.

In the early months of 1945 the situation deteriorated rapidly and in April 1945 Bose had to retreat from Rangoon along with some of his officers, and members of the women's regiment.

In this relationship of cooperation during difficult times India and Japan became very close indeed. The battle of Imphal was a military defeat, but proved to be a political victory. The Red Fort Trial of INA officers inspired all of India and dealt a grievous blow to the loyalty of the British-Indian forces to the King-Emperor.

"If God wills," Bose had said in one of his stirring orders of the day, "we shall die a martyr's death. And in our last sleep we shall kiss the road that will bring our Army to Delhi. The Road to Delhi is the Road to Freedom, Chalo Delhi." The blood of Indian and Japanese youth mingled in battlefields of Imphal, Kohima and Burma on the long march to Delhi. That common sacrifice has cemented an indissoluble spiritual bond between the peoples of Japan and India forever.

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