

Republic Day of India

Democracy and peace amid steady fiscal growth

Sujan R. Chinoy
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA

On the occasion of the 67th Republic Day of India, I convey warm greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan, the government of Japan and the people of this wonderful country. This year is recognized as the Year of the Saru (Monkey) in the Chinese Zodiac. I hope all of us can imbibe some of the qualities that the saru represents, such as being inventive, flexible and decisive.



On this important day, I also wish to extend greetings to my fellow Indians living in Japan. I acknowledge their stellar contributions to Japanese society. They have shown firm commitment to both India, their land of origin, as well as to their adopted land of Japan. Prime Minister H.E. Narendra Modi's outreach to overseas Indians has drawn them to participate in the incredible processes that are transforming India today.

It was on this day in 1950 that our constitution came into force, making the newly independent nation of India a sovereign and

democratic republic and secured for all its citizens "justice liberty, equality and fraternity." Every year, millions of proud Indians in India and across the world celebrate this milestone in the life of our nation. In New Delhi, a grand Republic Day parade depicts the rich tapestry of our culture, significant achievements in science and technology, industry, agriculture and the services sector. It is an occasion to pay tribute to the extraordinary sacrifices and capabilities of our armed forces and to acknowledge the soaring aspirations of the youth who account for a full half of our population.

It was a great honor for all Indians that Japanese Prime Minister H.E. Shinzo Abe, was the chief guest at the Republic Day Parade in 2014. Abe, a great champion of India-Japan ties, further cemented our "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" through his most successful visit to India from Dec. 11 to 13 last year. That his recent visit took place within days of my arrival in Japan as the ambassador of India is a matter of personal privilege for me. His visit has imparted fresh momentum to our relationship, building further on the visit of Modi to Japan in September 2014.

Over the past 66 years, the

constitution of India has provided a firm foundation for our unshakable faith in democracy, which is rooted in the ethos of India's ancient civilization. India's traditions of peace and nonviolence, acceptance and tolerance have withstood the test of time. We have reason to be proud of our accomplishments. We have reason to draw further inspiration from our own mature political processes and ongoing social and economic transformation.

The past year saw the Indian economy embark on a high growth trajectory under a strong government led by Modi. At a time when global economic growth remains weak, India has emerged as a beacon. As the fastest growing among all the large economies of the world, India's GDP growth for the 2014-15 fiscal year was an impressive 7.3 percent, and the forecast for fiscal 2015-16 is even higher at 7.5 percent.

India's foreign policy continues to be characterized by efforts to build a stable and peaceful regional and global environment that is conducive to progress and development for all. Modi's enduring vision of "Sab Ka Saath, Sab Ka Vikas" ("Together With All, Development for All") has found resonance in the global commu-



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi



President of India Pranab Mukherjee

nity. We must together face multiple challenges ranging from international terrorism to climate change.

Friends, the friendship between India and Japan is age old. It is deeply rooted in our spiritual affinity and strong cultural and civilizational ties, including through Buddhism. We have worked together to strengthen our common faith in democracy, openness, transparency and respect for the rule of law. The successful modernization of Japan in the 19th century was a great inspiration for many Indian leaders and intel-

lectuals. Contemporary Japan, with its splendid achievements, has evoked the same admiration in the hearts of Indian leaders and people.

As Modi said during Abe's recent visit to India, one cannot think of a strategic partnership that can exercise a more profound influence on shaping the course of Asia and our interlinked ocean regions than ours. No partner has played such a decisive role in India's economic transformation as Japan has. No friend will matter more in realizing India's economic dreams than Japan. There exists

unmatched public goodwill and political consensus in India for our Special Strategic and Global Partnership. Japanese private investments in India are rising sharply. The memorandum we signed on civil nuclear energy cooperation is a shining symbol of a new level of mutual confidence and strategic partnership in the cause of a peaceful and secure world. No less historic is our decision to introduce the high-speed shinkansen, known for its speed, reliability and safety, on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad route.

There is great scope for Japa-

nese companies to enhance their profitability and competitiveness by manufacturing in India. I encourage them to take advantage of our large domestic demand, growing profile as a global manufacturing hub, low cost of labor and open business environment governed by the rule of law. We appreciate the strength of Japanese public and private commitment for the "Make In India" program, as well as Abe's announcement of the creation of a ¥1.5 trillion fund to support Japanese companies in this context. We laud Abe's efforts to increase the quantum of Japan's finance and investments for India over five years to ¥3.5 trillion.

There are also many opportunities for Japanese participation in other flagship programs such as the Digital India mission, the Skill India mission and many others.

The announcement by Modi of a "visa on arrival" plan for all Japanese travelers, including visitors on business, from March 1, will further promote engagement at all levels.

The year 2015 proved to be a very active period in India-Japan relations. There were many significant exchanges, including those of the foreign and economic, trade and industry minis-

ters from Japan and those of the ministers for home, defense, railway and science and technology from India. The visits of the chief ministers of the Indian states of Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh to Japan and the visits of the governors of Kyoto and Toyama to India have deepened engagement between states and prefectures.

The year 2016 is already off to a good start, with back-to-back visits by the minister of state for power, coal, new and renewable energy of India for the eighth round of the energy dialogue and the chief minister of the Indian state of Haryana to explore business and investment tie-ups. Our cultural linkages remain robust, with the minister of state for home (interior) participating in the second meeting of the jointly initiated Samvad Conference on "Shared Values and Democracy in Asia" in Tokyo this month. The rest of this year's calendar promises to be busy. It augurs well for the future.

I look forward to working closely with the government of Japan, captains of business and industry, scholars and scientists and the friendly people of Japan at large to promote friendship and cooperation between India and Japan.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe hold a summit meeting in New Delhi on Dec. 12. KYODO

Focusing on cultural, economic and security ties

Yoshiro Mori
CHAIRMAN, REPRESENTATIVE
DIRECTOR, THE JAPAN-INDIA
ASSOCIATION



On the occasion of the 67th Republic Day of India, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and the people of India as chairman and representative director of the Japan-India Association.

Japan-India relations have been successfully developing

since I visited India in 2000 — the first incumbent Japanese prime minister to do so in 10 years — and launched the "Japan-India Global Partnership" initiative to re-establish a bilateral relationship that had been damaged after nuclear tests in India. After Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and

Prime Minister Narendra Modi became elected the leaders of their respective countries, the bilateral relationship was upgraded to a "Special Strategic and Global Partnership," emphasizing cultural and spiritual bonds, as well as security and economic ties.

During his visit to India last December, Prime Minister Abe spoke of the strength of the Japan-India bonds in Varanasi, the holiest of the sacred cities

in Hinduism, and near Samath, where Gautama Buddha first taught the Dharma.

The summit meeting at that time brought about substantial results: Both sides essentially agreed on the Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and confirmed that the Japanese Shinkansen system would be used for the development of the Mumbai Ahmedabad high-speed rail

corridor project.

In addition, both sides agreed on defense cooperation; further economic cooperation for Japanese companies setting up businesses in India; and the target of having 10,000 young Indians visit Japan over the coming five years.

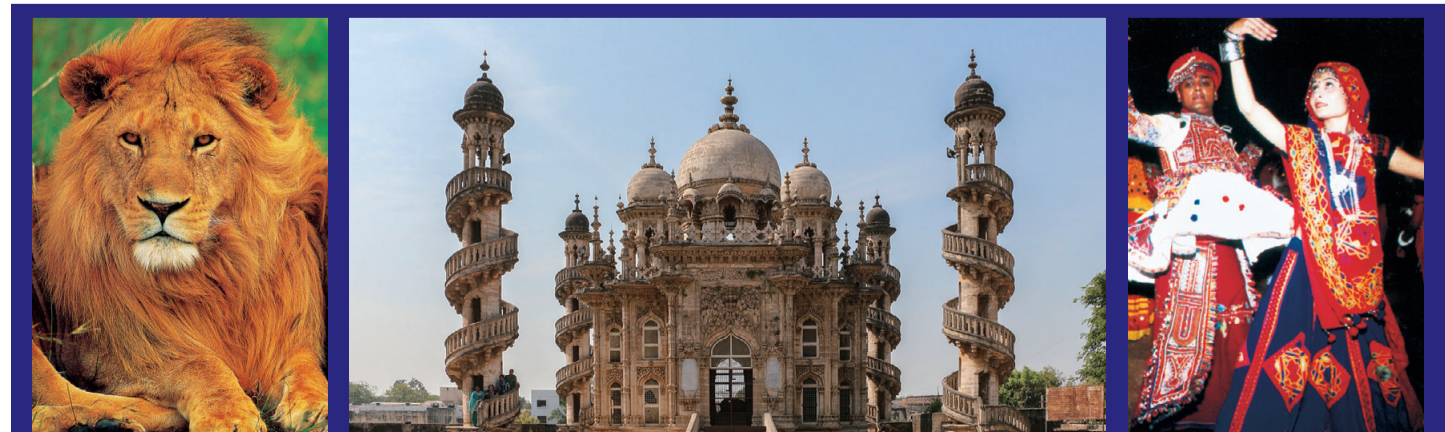
Both governments vowed to strengthen cooperation for the United Nations Security Council reform; the early construction of an international

framework toward nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons; and the resolution of issues that face the world such as climate change.

The Japan-India Association marks 114 years since it was established in 1903. We are determined to continue our contribution to further expand and deepen bilateral relations, which will take on increasing importance.



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Republic Day of India

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Hirofumi Hosoda,
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-INDIA
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LEAGUE

The Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the people of India on the occasion of the 67th Republic Day of India.

India, the world's largest democracy, is one of the most important partners for Japan, as the two countries share universal values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, while maintaining friendly relations founded on a long history of exchange.

In December, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited India and held a Japan-India summit meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. After the meeting, the two leaders signed the "Japan and India Vision 2025 Special Strategic and Global Partnership: Working Together for Peace and Prosperity of the Indo-Pacific Re-

gion and the World." Additionally, various achievements such as introducing Japan's high-speed rail technology, namely the shinkansen for Mumbai-Ahmedabad route, and an agreement in principle was reached on the cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy were announced.

Abe noted that the Japan-India relationship is blessed with the largest potential for development of any bilateral relationship anywhere in the world and that he intends to cooperate with Modi to transform the Japan-India relationship from a bud into a bloom in a new era of Japan-India relations. Based on the close relations at the top levels, I expect that exchanges between the two countries will be further expanded in wide-ranging fields and on various levels.

The Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League remains strongly committed to contributing actively to the further deepening of our partnership and for further prosperity and continuing development of our cordial relationship.

Working together for increased development and prosperity

Masami Iijima
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-INDIA BUSINESS
COOPERATION COMMITTEE



On behalf of the Japan-India Business Cooperation Committee (JIBCC), I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 67th Republic Day of India.

As two of Asia's largest democracies, Japan and India have built extremely amicable relations based on common strategic interests and shared values.

In particular, the growing economic interest of each country has been of great significance. Direct investment into India reached ¥219.3 billion in 2014, and in October of the same year, there were 1,209 Japanese companies in India — figures our two prime ministers have resolved to double within five years.

In a survey published by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation in November India topped the list of medium and long-term promising countries for overseas businesses, indicating the excitement and

high expectations among Japanese businesspeople. I believe that the increase of Japanese involvement in India will serve as a driving force for the growth of Asia as a whole.

The JIBCC was established in 1966 to enhance mutual understanding and friendship and facilitate economic relations between Japan and India.

Significant events last year included an economic mission to Mumbai, Chennai, and Bangalore and a joint meeting with India-Japan Business Cooperation Committee and related events in Tokyo. At the meeting, we discussed the progress of cooperation in infrastructure, with a focus on the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor. We also examined challenges and prospects presented by "Make in India," an Indian government initiative.

To accelerate the strengthening of Japan-India economic ties, we are all committed to further vigorous action.

I conclude by once again by offering my congratulations on the occasion of the 67th Republic Day of India together with my very best wishes for India's increasing development and prosperity in the days and years ahead.

Joint cooperation to improve mutual business environment

Hiroaki Nakanishi and Takashi Shoda
CHAIRS OF KEIDANREN COMMITTEE
ON SOUTH ASIA



Nakanishi



Shoda

On behalf of Keidanren, we wish to extend to the government and people of India heartfelt congratulations on its 67th Republic Day.

Japan and India have cultivated an excellent and mutually beneficial relationship through the shuttle diplomacy of their leaders and the holding of the Japan-India Business Leaders Forum. On the economic front, Japan and India have steadily developed closer ties, with bilateral trade tripling and Japanese investment in India expanding eightfold over the past decade. The number of Japanese companies operating in India also increased to more than 1,200. It is expected that business exchanges will further expand, while capitalizing on the effect of the India-Japan Comprehen-

sive Economic Partnership Agreement that came into force in August 2011.

In particular, going forward, it will become even more important that Japan and India cooperate on the swift realization of relevant projects, such as the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor project that many Japanese companies are involved in, as well as on the improvement of infrastructure, including power supply, water treatment, roads and ports. Keidanren is convinced that the technological capabilities and know-how of Japanese companies can contribute to improving the

lives of people in India.

In this context, coinciding with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to India in December, the Japanese and Indian business communities held the Eighth Japan-India Business Leaders Forum in Delhi. At the forum, exchanges of views took place on improving the business environment and developing infrastructure in India, with a view to further strengthening economic ties. The forum compiled a joint report and submitted it to Abe and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Keidanren has high expectations the two leaders will exercise strong leadership to realize the proposals of the forum promptly and steadily. For their part, the business communities of the two nations will work closely to further develop the economies of Japan and India. We ask all relevant stakeholders for their continued support and cooperation.

Domestic reform, foreign policy initiatives spur domestic growth

Ryuko Hira
PRESIDENT OF ICIJ

The renewed glory, power and potential of India is testament to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's unprecedented landslide victory with a promise to materialize India's huge economic potential and transform India into a fully developed nation.

Will Modi succeed in this herculean task? World leaders have highly rated Modi's accomplishments since his inauguration 18 months ago. Newspaper polls by India Today and MINT reported his popularity at 57 and 79 percent in August. One of Modi's most commendable accomplishments is easing the fears of pessimism, criticism, discontent, downturn and economic stagnation in India's masses that existed before his election. Modi has won the trust of Indians, as well as of the world community, for a strong, disciplined and clean government that delivers. Doubling economic growth from 4 to nearly 8 percent and kick-starting stalled mega-infrastructure projects has won Modi's India

the status of world's "bright spot" from the International Monetary Fund.

Modi has made India more visible in external affairs with a dynamic, friendly approach to all nations. Modi's philosophy of "India is a friend to all nations" has immensely contributed to greater cooperation. Since being elected, Modi has made official visits to 30 countries and received presidential or prime ministers from 71. Modi has transformed India from a "balancing power" to a "leading power." Modi's consideration of neighbors first, followed by increased and active relations with the Middle East, Africa, central Asia and Pacific islands, dubbed "Link West," is paying rich economic and strategic dividends. Modi continues to pursue unconventional out-of-the-box thinking for economic matters in foreign policy.

The global business community has hailed Modi's economic reforms and fiscal policies. In October 2014, petroleum subsidies were reduced to improve fiscal discipline. Substantial reforms to liberalize majority investments by foreign investors were implemented in insurance, defense, railway and real estate. In November 2014, the

Apprentices Act, allowing on-the-job training for young workers was enacted, greatly contributing to increased employment. Small-scale enterprises received much awaited labor law reform. Additionally, a substantial budget for infrastructure and public works was approved.

Japan's Indian population is 25,775, compared to 3 million in the U.S. and 1.5 million in the U.K. Japan has expressed great interest to increase human exchanges at all levels and important policy changes are being considered to encourage and enhance these.

Modi has placed great trust in Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, while Abe has high expectations of India's cooperation for Japan's economic and strategic needs. India-Japan relations have flourished in a new era of special and strategic global partnership.

Abe has expressed hope to

continue serving the nation until the 2020 Olympics. Modi's primary initiatives of "Make in India," "Smart City," "Clean India," "Digital India," "Skill India" and "Start up India" shall transform India and build greater trust and confidence of his leadership to pave the way for a second 5-year term of Modi government to fulfill India's potential and promise.

Republic Day is the most important day of India as it marks the birth of our nation as a republic.

Republic Day is a national festival celebrated across India, with the main Republic Day celebration taking place in New Delhi. A grand Republic Day parade is organized on this day and a special guest, normally a senior foreign dignitary, is invited to be the main guest. Abe and U.S. President Barack Obama had the honor in 2014 and 2015, respectively.

The ceremony begins in the morning of 26th January with the laying of a wreath at the Amar Jawan Jyothi at the India Gate by the prime minister to show gratitude to the martyrs who gave their lives for the country.

Soon after the president unfurls the national flag, the parade begins, led by war heroes, armed forces' members who have received gallantry awards, followed by young boys and girls who have won National Bravery Awards for that year lead the parade.

Soldiers from different armed forces, paramilitary units and police units march to the tune of a military band. A colourful flyby by helicopters and airplanes makes the ceremony most spectacular. Folk dances by cultural troupes and various performances by school children keep the audience spellbound.

A tableaux of Indian states depicting their culture follows the children. The procession lasts several hours and finally ends at Red Fort.

In the evening, at Raisina Hill, home to the president's residence, is illuminated. Celebrations last three days and end on the evening of Jan. 28 with the beating retreat ceremony by the armed forces.

Republic Day marks the birth of our nation. It is a great day for all of us for remembrance, thanksgiving and rejoicing. It is a day to remember and keep alive the fond memories of national heroes who have shed their blood for the freedom of India.

It is a day of national pledge to make India a truly developed nation. A great deal more remains to be done to achieve this goal. It is up to all to make the republic of India as world's most admired nation.



Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe attend the Ganga Aarti, a ritual held on the banks of the Ganges River in Varanasi, India, on Dec. 12. KYODO

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