

India Independence Day Special

Rapid progress in diverse endeavors

H.E. SUJAN R. CHINYO
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA TO JAPAN



On the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day, I extend my warm greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and to the government and people of Japan. I also take this opportunity to convey cordial greetings to the growing number of fellow Indians in Japan who are stakeholders in the rapidly evolving special strategic and global partnership between India and Japan.

India stands today as a bulwark of democracy and stability. Just over seven decades ago, we took our first steps in charting a sovereign future based on values and ideals inherited from our ancient civilization and guided by the key principles of truth and nonviolence that defined our independence movement.

Ties between India and Japan are cemented by close bonds forged on the anvil of Buddhism. Our bilateral relationship is founded on shared values of democracy, respect for rule of law and an abiding commitment to peace. We have a growing convergence on strategic and economic issues. We support an Indo-Pacific architecture that is free, open and inclusive.

Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, India's economy has been growing at over 7 percent. Today, India is the world's fastest-growing large economy. It is emerging as a global hub for manufacturing and innovation. With the introduction of a goods and services tax, we are optimistic that growth figures will reach 8 percent or more in the near future. The Indian economy offers unparalleled opportunities for Japanese companies to partici-

pate in flagship programs such as "Make in India," "Skill India" and "Smart Cities," as well as industrial townships and corridors.

India is Japan's largest official development assistance partner and Japan is the third-largest investor in India. Japan Bank for International Cooperation surveys in recent years have consistently ranked India as the most preferred medium-term destination for Japanese manufacturing companies. Japanese investments in India rose to \$4.7 billion in fiscal 2016-2017. The Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Railway project is a symbol of our thriving and mutually beneficial partnership.

Japan's economic footprint in India has expanded beyond the manufacturing sector to include the services sector, logistics and financial markets. New initiatives cover health care, agriculture, food processing and a digital partnership.

A growing number of Japanese companies are participating in skill transfer initiatives in India, such as the establishment of Japan-India Institutes of Manufacturing, which aims to enhance the manufacturing base in India by training 30,000 people over the next 10 years in Japanese manufacturing skills and practices. On a parallel track, India has initiated the dispatch of interns to Japan under the Technical Intern Training Program. India also attaches great importance to promoting Japanese language education in India. The availability of well-trained human resources equipped with Japanese-language and manufacturing skills would further facilitate the entry of Japanese companies to India.

Cooperation on clean energy remains a priority, and India and Japan have successfully concluded an agreement for cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Our cooperation in science and technology, as well as space and marine sciences, is growing, especially through institutional links between universities and the Indian Institutes of Technology and laboratories



President of India Ram Nath Kovind

of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research in India with counterparts in Japan.

In a world of growing challenges and opportunities, the relationship between our two countries is a key factor in promoting stability in the Indo-Pacific region and fostering a peaceful and multipolar world buttressed by increased connectivity and an inclusive, open and balanced regional architecture. India and Japan have also agreed to work together on connectivity and capacity-building projects in developing nations. The "Act East" policy of India complements the "Enhanced Partnership for Quality Infrastructure" of Japan, as reflected in the working of our bilateral Act East Forum.

Following the successful visit of Indian External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj to Japan for the ninth Strategic Dialogue in March this year, we are now looking forward to the forthcoming visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi for the next annual summit meeting.



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi

India's ties with Japan in recent years have received a fillip due to the efforts of all stakeholders ranging from parliamentarians to captains of industry and leaders of states in India and prefectures in Japan. People-to-people contacts, including in tourism, are steadily rising. The popularity of Indian cuisine and culture is also widespread throughout Japan. It was remarkable that the International Day of Yoga was celebrated in diverse places within Japan in June this year, even being recognized in the Diet for the first time.

It has been a privilege and an honor to represent India in Japan at a time of such great progress in bilateral ties. With our shared democratic values, we seek to work together with the government and the people of Japan to take our partnership to new heights in the 21st century.

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

Tourism, megaprojects among collaborations

YOSHIRO MORI
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-INDIA ASSOCIATION

On the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day, I have the great honor of sending my most heartfelt congratulations from the Japan-India Association (JIA) to the people and government of India.

The JIA is proud of having extended a helping hand to the great independence fighters such as Rash Behari Bose and Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose before and during World War II.

The Japan-India relationship of today is witnessing an unprecedented develop-

ment thanks to the efforts of the governments and peoples of both countries. Prime Ministers Shinzo Abe and Narendra Modi, with their shared conviction and friendship, are promoting Indo-Pacific cooperation strategies for the peace and prosperity of our region and beyond. Our bilateral relationship is also enlarging both in trade and investment. A series of megaprojects in India such as the shinkansen project between Mumbai and Ahmedabad are developing. People-to-people contacts are growing in terms of scholarships, youth exchange programs, internships, tourism promotion and so on.

I hope that the 72nd anniversary of India's independence will mark another important milestone for the relationship between India and Japan.

Leaders aim for regional prosperity

HIROYUKI HOSODA
PRESIDENT, THE 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 people of the Republic of India on the occasion of India's 72nd Independence Day.

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

The relationship between India and Japan has steadily developed through mutual trust and the leadership of our two prime ministers. In September last year, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited the state of Gujarat, Prime

Minister Narendra Modi's home state, where they agreed to drive prosperity and stability of the Indo-Pacific region through coordinating the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" and the "Act East" policy. Based on such close relations on the level of national leadership, we have great expectations for the further expansion of bilateral cooperation and partnership on regional and global agendas.

The Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League has had various exchanges of opinions on different occasions, such as during visits to Japan from Indian members of Parliament and business representatives. For example, members of the league had a meeting with Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar when he visited Japan in February. Legislative exchanges between India and Japan have been accelerated through our mutual visits. The league remains strongly committed to strengthening our two countries' relations through further exchange.

I would like to 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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India Independence Day Special

Perspectives on India-Japan business strategy

RYUKO HIRA
CHAIRMAN, THE INDIAN COMMERCE AND
INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION JAPAN



I have lived in Japan for 52 years and experienced the transformation from the first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru's "Asianism" to Japan's Indo-Pacific endeavors and current Prime Minister Narendra Modi's free and open autonomous strategy for India. Today, we commemorate India's freedom from British rule. Colonization deprived India of basic human needs. The true independence of India is a celebration of the distant future. The ongoing competition, rivalry and conflicting strategies of other countries

burden India with dependency and problems, obstructing its true economic freedom and growth.

Since independence, Japan has continuously assisted in the development of India. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee established the flagship project of the India-Japan economic partnership, which was faithfully continued by his successor Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.

A significant acceleration of India's relations with Japan and the USA was undertaken by Modi and has opened new horizons for India to become the world's latest superpower.

The transformation from Nehru's Asianism to an all-inclusive, free and open autonomous strategy of India is the very basis for vibrant economic growth to liberate and deliver true economic independence to a third of the world's poorest living in India. Developing the economy,

improving people's livelihood and consolidating national strength are all India's top priorities.

Today, there are over 22,000 Japanese companies in China and more than 1,500 in India. The European and American companies in India have had a much older, deeper and wider presence. The optimists would say there is equal or greater potential for another 20,000 Japanese companies to do business in India, but the persistent pessimism of Japanese corporations, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, has to be aggressively overcome by private and public sector initiatives.

The Indian Commerce and Industry Association, established in 1921, serves as an apex body striving to increase bilateral trade and investments. On behalf of all members, we convey greetings to readers of The Japan Times and thank the newspaper for publishing this article.

Business leaders forum to coincide with Modi's visit

TETSURO TOMITA AND KAZUO HIRAI
CHAIRS OF KEIDANREN COMMITTEE ON
SOUTH ASIA



On behalf of Keidanren, we would like to offer our sincere congratulations to the people of India on the occasion of the country's 72nd Independence Day.

Japan and India have built close, amicable relations through shuttle diplomacy between their state leaders and business leaders forums involving businesspeople from both countries. Under the leadership of His Excellency Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the "Make in India" initiative has provided powerful impetus to overseas investment. Direct Japanese investment in India has increased by 5.3-fold over the

past 10 years, and more than 1,500 Japanese companies now do business in India. We fully expect that continuing improvements to the business environment in India will further invigorate bilateral economic exchange.

Since 2007, Keidanren has held India-Japan Business Leaders Forums with the Indian business community in conjunc-

tion with state leaders' visits, and the 10th forum took place in Gujarat when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited India in September last year. Participants of the forum exchanged views on encouraging business ties, improving the business environment and developing infrastructure, and the joint report of the forum was submitted to Modi and Abe. The 11th forum will be held to coincide with Modi's visit to Japan this year. This forum will forge even stronger cooperative economic and industrial relationships between Japan and India, and contribute to further develop the special strategic global partnership between our two countries. We kindly ask for your continued support and cooperation in this endeavor.

'Action-oriented' partnership sees ongoing growth

MASAMI IJIMA
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-INDIA BUSINESS
COOPERATION COMMITTEE



On behalf of the Japan-India Business Cooperation Committee (JIBCC), I would like to offer my sincere congratulations on the occasion of the 72nd Independence Day of India.

Japan and India have built amicable relations through political, economic and cultural exchanges over many years. Both countries have agreed to transform the Japan-India special strategic and global partnership into a deep, broad-based, action-oriented partnership. It is highly expected that the two countries will cooperate with each other in

countless fields, working together for the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region and the world.

Meanwhile, in addition to these developments, the number of Japanese companies in India reached 1,369 last October, up 5 percent from a figure of 1,305 in 2016, and a significant number of large-scale projects, such as the bullet train line adopting the Japanese shinkansen system, are also currently in progress. The Indian government forecasts economic growth to reach 7.5 percent in fiscal 2018 as a result of the stability of demonetization and the introduction of a goods and services tax. With the increasing business momentum in India, the pace of penetration by Japanese companies is expected to accelerate.

The JIBCC was established in 1966 to enhance mutual understanding and friendship and facilitate economic relations between Japan and India. Last January, the Japan and Tokyo Chambers of Commerce

and Industry, which hold the secretariat of JIBCC, dispatched an economic mission to Delhi, led by Chairman Akio Mimura and consisting of approximately 100 members. On that occasion, the JIBCC held its 42nd joint meeting with the India-Japan Business Cooperation Committee, at which the two sides actively discussed the further expansion of trade and investment between the two nations. In addition, it held sessions briefed by officials of six major Indian states, in which the merits, investment opportunities and investment-attracting policies of each state were introduced. The JIBCC hopes to make use of the information, ideas and connections gained through these events for future activities of the committee.

I would like to conclude by once again offering my congratulations on the 72nd independence day of India, and my strong hope for India's continuing development and improving prosperity in the future.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe before boarding the shinkansen from Tokyo to Kobe on Nov. 12, 2016.
EMBASSY OF INDIA



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, first lady Akie Abe and Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad, Gujarat, on Sept. 15.
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