

India Independence Day Special

Relations prosper on various levels

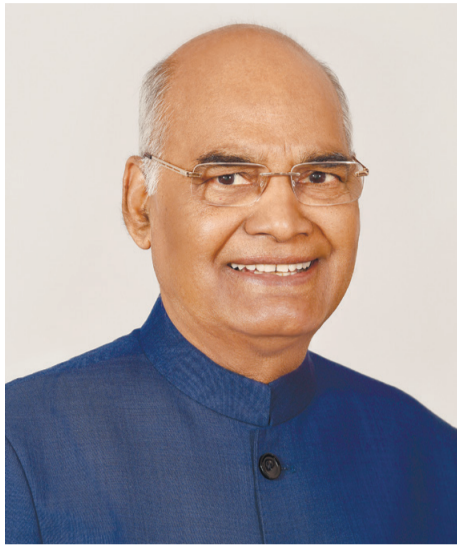
SANJAY KUMAR VERMA
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA



On the occasion of India's 74th Independence Day, I extend my warm greetings to their majesties the emperor and empress of Japan, the government and people of Japan. I

also take this opportunity to convey my special greetings to the growing number of fellow Indians in Japan who are important stakeholders in the ever-evolving "India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership."

The coronavirus pandemic has severely tested the resilience of all nations. In India, saving lives has been our foremost priority. On this issue, while our case load continues to be high, we have managed a low death rate and high recovery rate. This can be attributed to early steps to protect and insulate our people. We have also substantially ramped up our capacities in the health care sector in the past few months. As a populous, developing country and a democratic society, fighting the coronavirus is not a small challenge for India. While we care for our own citizens, India is also extending a helping hand to other partners, in our neighborhood and beyond. As a major producer of pharmaceuticals and medical supplies, we have provided supplies to over 150 partner countries, proving our credentials



President of India Ram Nath Kovind

as the "pharmacy of the world."

We have given the highest priority to deliver benefits to poor households, with a package of more than \$300 billion. We have also put forward a vision of Atmanirbhar Bharat or Self-Reliant India. The idea of self-reliance does not mean seeking self-centered arrangements or turning the country inward. Its essential aim is to ensure India's position as a key participant in global supply chains. In the post-coronavirus world, we need a new template of globalization based on fairness, equality and humanity. What we need is a reformed multilateralism that reflects contemporary realities and can respond to present-day challenges. India and Japan have long championed



Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi

such initiatives.

Last year, we celebrated the 150th anniversary of the father of our nation, Mahatma Gandhi, by achieving full sanitation coverage in 600,000 villages. In five years, we installed over 110 million household toilets, which improved our rural sanitation cover from 38 percent to 100 percent. We have achieved gender parity in elementary and secondary education. In the last six years, we opened 400 million new bank accounts — 220 million of which are held by women. Our policies of financial inclusion have allowed us to make direct benefit transfers of \$150 billion to over 700 million people, while food security programs reach 813 million citizens. Our Housing for All program would ensure that every Indian will have a safe and secure roof over their head by 2022.

Today, our Ayushman Bharat plan is the world's largest health protection program, covering 500 million individuals. Today, all our villages and over 99 percent of households have electricity. Our forest cover and wildlife population has increased. The recently approved New Education Policy

2020, built on the foundational pillars of access, equity, quality, affordability and accountability, aims to transform India into a vibrant knowledge society by making education more holistic, flexible and multidisciplinary, suited to 21st century needs.

Our motto is Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas (Together, for everyone's growth, with everyone's trust) with sustainability at its core. India, as a founding member, facilitated the formation of the International Solar Alliance, the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure and the Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence. India's development partnership with other developing countries is a testimony to our commitment to global peace and prosperity. It encompasses a wide range of programs and projects, extensive capacity building and technical assistance, as well as humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. There is a growing global appreciation and recognition of India as a provider of assistance to developing countries and its role in south-south and triangular cooperation. The effectiveness of our open and transparent cooperation with post-Taliban Afghanistan and confident engagement with other international donors was a turning point in the perception of India's development assistance.

The India-Japan relationship has achieved newer heights in recent years. The annual summit meetings, "two-plus-two" dialogues, expanding defense cooperation, a multidimensional economic partnership and more reflect our vibrant and multifaceted relations. We are also working together to achieve a free, open and inclusive world order based on respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue and adherence to international rules and laws, for the benefit of the Indo-Pacific region and the world at large.

Japan is a valued partner in India's economic transformation. Recognizing India's

Further developing resilient friendship

YOSHIRO MORI
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-INDIA
ASSOCIATION



On the occasion of the anniversary of India's independence, I would like to send my most heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of India.

I am gratified to witness that India's international status is constantly on the rise and that the Japan-India relationship maintains a strong upward trend.

This year, however, both our countries are experiencing unprecedented adversity because of the persistent coronavirus. I express my sympathy to the people of India, with the third-largest number of infections in the world, and in particular

to the families of the deceased.

Both Japan and India are obliged to suspend mutual visits to prevent the spread of the disease. Business, cultural and other exchanges have been adversely affected. However, the relationship between our two countries is in excellent shape thanks to solid and constructive official relations and unchanged friendship between Japanese and Indian people.

I am optimistic about our future as the research and development of medicines and vaccines tackled by many countries, including Japan and India, will produce positive results in the near future.

On this auspicious occasion, the Japan-India Association, with its 117 years of history and wide-ranging network, renews its determination to work for further development of mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and India.



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THE INDIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE-JAPAN
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THE INDIAN SOCIAL SOCIETY
Hon. President: Johnny Lalwani

THE INDIA CLUB
Hon. President: Bhaven Jhaveri

INDIA 15th August INDEPENDENCE DAY

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India Independence Day Special

Intercountry business flourishing: Close bilateral bonds continue to flourish

RYUKO HIRA
CHAIRMAN, THE INDIAN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION JAPAN



Forcing each country and every human being to confront deep, profound questions of our ways of life at all levels, the coronavirus pandemic brings to light numerous environmental, social and economic implications.

This pandemic can be considered to be a test for all of us as human beings. It's a test of whether we are ready to be transformed based on the core value of life, sustainable community, not short-term, but long-term goals, purpose, happiness and prosperity.

Attending to urgent situations by implementing various and necessary policies such as rapidly expanding health infrastructures, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, at the same time, calls for a self-reliant community, which is the foundation of the Gandhian principle of Gram Swaraj — a social and political belief on the human values of truth and nonviolence. With this principle, every village should be, as Gandhi said in 1942, "Independent of its neighbors for its own vital wants and yet interdependent for many others in which dependence is necessary."

The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization found that the pandemic will significantly increase risks to food

security and hinder humanitarian assistance operations, due to the disruption of international supply chains.

Rural farming toward self-sufficiency in domestic food production can be at the center of every country's plan for a sustainable recovery. This will require a reversal of previous trends toward ever greater urbanization, while promoting domestic manufacturing and having lesser exposure to the global production chain will be critical for each country under the pandemic situation.

India has two advantages. These are agriculture, which has about 60 percent of its population engaging in it, and information technology. These make it possible for local distant and local rural area communities to survive and flourish with human values, as the prime minister said on June 1, 2018, "As we went through the centuries, there was innovation, but in all this at the heart of this was ethics, values and human values. ... Technology can contribute in a big way if it is also combined with values."

For roughly 250 years during the Edo Period (1603 to 1868), Japan was self-sufficient in its resources even as Edo was the largest city in the world at that time, estimated at 1 million to 1.25 million people, compared with London 860,000 (1801) and Paris 670,000 (1802). During that time imports were rare due to the national policy of isolation, whereas today Japan depends on imports from other countries for 78 percent of its energy, 60 percent of its food in caloric value and 82 percent of its timber. Another remarkable feature in this period was the flourishing cultural devel-

opment of Japanese unique origin.

According to a wage list of carpenters hired by the Edo feudal government, it took 200 years for wages to double, implying an annual economic growth rate in those days of almost 0.3 percent. According to today's numbers, the economy of the Edo Period did not grow much. Can we still say that systems of the Edo Period, with repeated reuse and recycling, were lesser than our modern systems?

The Vedas, an ancient Indian philosophy of Sanatana Dharma (eternal righteousness and truth) explicitly shows the wholeness, oneness of nature and human beings, king and people, and how effective and efficient it is to develop social and economic structure without harming nature and without exploiting others to build sustainable, resilient and harmonious societies.

Japan-India innovation initiatives based on shared values and cultural proximity between the countries may jointly develop excellent strategies to overcome the challenges of this pandemic-stricken world.

The Indian Commerce and Industry Association Japan (ICIJ), celebrating its 100-year founding anniversary next February, serves as an apex body to provide support, guidance and offer consultancy and advisory services to all interested parties enabling them to fully develop the economic potential and investment between Japan and India.

While felicitating India's independence and freedom, on behalf of all ICIJ members, I convey our deepest appreciation to all who have contributed to India's cause and to readers of The Japan Times.

HIROYUKI HOSODA
PRESIDENT OF THE JAPAN-INDIA PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of the Republic of India on this occasion of the 74th Independence Day of India.



India, the world's largest democratic state, is one of the most important partners of Japan. India and Japan share the universal values of democracy, human rights and

the rule of law, and have enjoyed a strong relationship through a long history of interaction.

Japan-India relations have been flourishing steadily through the leadership of our prime ministers and the friendship between the people of both nations. The three summit meetings between the two prime ministers last year served to strengthen bilateral ties based on the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership." The first Japan-India "two-plus-two" ministerial meeting held in November last year also symbolizes the strong bond between the two countries.

The worldwide spread of the coronavirus is an urgent challenge in both Japan and India. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Prime Minister Narendra Modi held a telephone conference in April and shared the

view to reinforce coordination and cooperation between the two countries with the aim of stopping the spread of the virus and further strengthening bilateral ties in a post-pandemic world. I pray that the situation will improve, and hope for the resumption of the prime ministers' mutual visits, as well as dialogue and interaction at various levels between the two nations.

The Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League would like to actively contribute to reinforcing the Japan-India relationship blessed with the greatest potential for development of any bilateral relationship in the world.

On this special occasion, I would like to send my best wishes to the people of India for their further prosperity and reiterate my hopes for the continued development of the two countries' friendship.

Further strengthening mutual cooperation

TETSURO TOMITA AND NOBUYUKI HIRANO
CHAIRS OF THE COMMITTEE ON SOUTH ASIA, KEIDANREN

On behalf of Keidanren, we would like to offer our sincere congratulations to the people of India on the occasion of the country's 74th Independence Day.

India and Japan have enjoyed good relations for many years and have built close and mutually beneficial ties through interactions and exchanges across a wide range of fields, including politics, diplomacy, business and culture.

Today, countries around the world are in uncharted territory as they face the difficulties presented by the coronavirus pandemic, and India and Japan are no exceptions. We are dealing with the impacts of the restrictions placed on people's movements and on social



and economic activities, as well as other challenges.

Coping with such unprecedented circumstances is not easy. Now, more than ever, it is crucial we further strengthen cooperation between our two countries and together build a robust and sustainable international economic community. Living with the coronavirus and looking ahead to the post-coronavirus era has highlighted the importance of digital transformation,

including contactless technologies. It is crucial that we push forward with innovation by combining efforts to achieve Japan's vision of "Society 5.0" alongside initiatives being promoted by information technology superpower India, such as "Digital India" and "Startup India."

Since 2007, Keidanren has held India-Japan Business Leaders Forums with the Indian business community in conjunction with mutual visits by state leaders, where we have deepened discussions on business topics and compiled joint reports for submission to the leaders of both countries. Through such activities, we will continue to enhance ties between the Indian and Japanese business communities and will contribute to further developing the "India-Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership." We kindly ask for your continued support and cooperation in this endeavor.

Building better economic relationships

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 74th Independence Day of India.

It is my great pleasure that India and Japan have built amicable relations over many years. Our countries' cooperation

and coordination in countless fields have created high expectations as we work toward both a free and open Indo-Pacific and world.

The JIBCC was established in 1966 to enhance mutual understanding and friendship, as well as to facilitate economic relations between India and Japan. We are currently looking at how we can hold our 44th regular joint meeting in cooperation with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry during the coronavirus outbreak. The JIBCC hopes to contribute to the further development of business between the two nations through our activities.

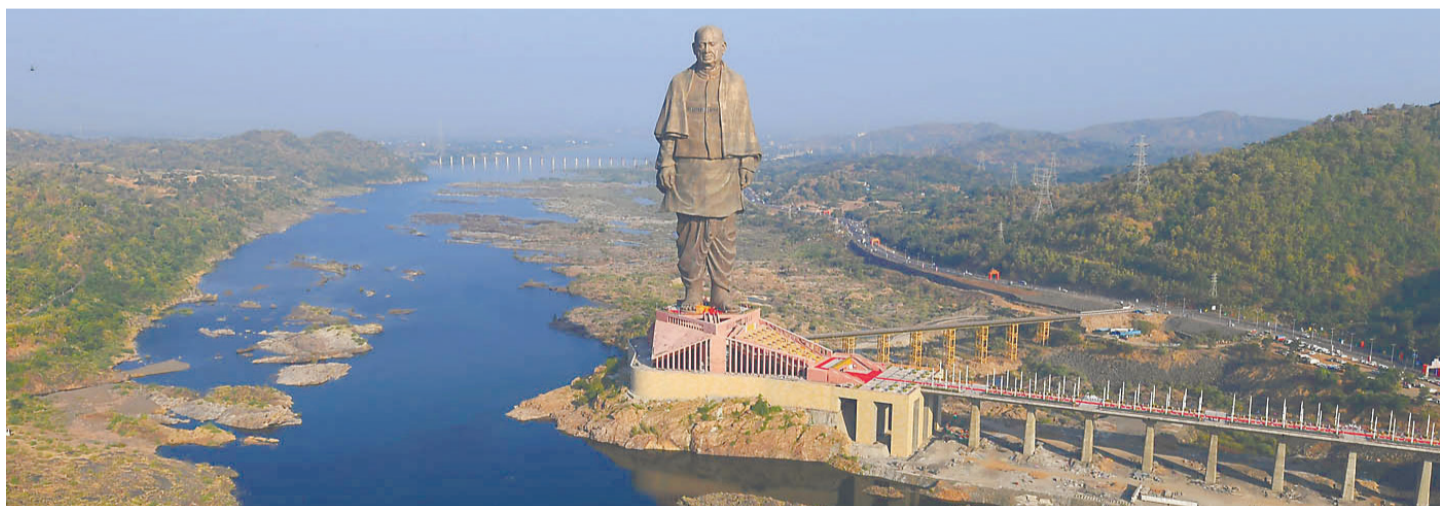
Prime Minister Narendra Modi

announced a special economic package of approximately \$266 billion, or 10 percent of India's GDP, and emphasized the five pillars of the Atmanirbhar Bharat, or Self-Reliant India vision. I strongly believe that the Modi administration's initiative will attract more foreign investment and boost local manufacturing and service industries.

Lastly, we at the JIBCC offer our deepest condolences and sympathy to all those affected by the coronavirus in India. At this difficult juncture, I hereby reaffirm our commitment to further strengthening our bilateral relationship and sincerely hope for India's continuing growth and prosperity in the future.



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