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Inaugural Address by Ambassador of India to Japan H.E. Mr. Sibi George  
at the Seminar on “India-Japan Partnership : Kyoto”, Embassy of India,  
Tokyo, 08 October 2024

His Excellency Mr Takatoshi Nishiwaki, Hon’ble Governor of Kyoto Prefecture

His Excellency Mr Muneshia Ishida, Chairperson of the Assembly of Kyoto Prefecture

His Excellency Mr Taro Honda, Hon’ble Member of the House of Representatives of Japan

Her Excellency Ms Sachiko Horiba, Hon’ble Member of the House of Representatives of Japan

Mrs. Geetanjali Vikram Kirloskar, Co-Chair, CII Council on Japan and Chairperson & MD of Kirloskar Systems Pvt Ltd.

Mr. Kazuya Nakajo, Executive Vice President, JETRO

Distinguished guests

Good afternoon!

2. It is an honor to welcome His Excellency Mr. Takatoshi Nishiwaki, Governor of Kyoto Prefecture, and the distinguished delegation from Kyoto.

3. I am delighted that this event celebrating India and Japan partnership with a special focus on Kyoto has become a reality. We are here today not just to strengthen our ties, but to also celebrate the longstanding cultural and spiritual connections that unite our two countries.

4. My visits to Kyoto have been an unforgettable experience, not just for the beauty of the temples, shrines, and gardens, but for the deep similarities that exist between our cultures. On every visit, I have been reminded of the ancient teachings of Buddhism that travelled from India to Japan centuries ago. This shared heritage is a reminder that the bridges we build today in business, technology and tourism are deeply rooted in our spiritual and cultural past.

**Friends,**

5. In recent years, relationship between India and Japan has evolved into a dynamic economic and strategic partnership. Today, we share a Special Strategic and Global Partnership, founded on shared values, mutual respect, and a common vision for peace and prosperity. Our cooperation extends across multiple sectors, including trade, investment, science and technology, energy, health, space, and defense. Further, we are united in our efforts to ensure peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, including through initiatives like the QUAD.

6. Economic collaboration is a vital part of this partnership. Japan remains one of India's largest investors, with a target of 5 trillion yen in public and private investment by 2027. We are already making great strides toward this goal, which will pave the way for aiming for even more ambitious vision in the future.

7. A part of this vision will be fulfilled by substantially expanding the presence of Japanese companies in India. Currently, around 1,500

Japanese companies are operating in India, but our ambition is to expand this number to 15,000. The frameworks to enable this are in place. Japan is the only country to have established dedicated industrial townships in India, which offer infrastructure, simplified regulations, and a skilled workforce. We are placing a special emphasis on helping Japanese SMEs enter India and have set up a dedicated Cell in the Embassy to this end.

**Friends,**

8. Kyoto's rich cultural heritage, traditions, and strengths in advanced manufacturing, present a unique opportunity for deeper India-Japan collaborations. Today's discussions will focus on several key areas of mutual interest: investments, manufacturing and film industry.

9. Investment is an important area for collaboration. Kyoto is home to world-class firms in sectors like electronics, pharmaceuticals, healthcare and other advanced technologies, which align well with India's growth trajectory. Companies like Omron, which have their base on Kyoto, already have a presence in India. I would like to encourage more businesses from Kyoto to explore opportunities in India.

10. Kyoto's reputation as a global cultural capital, drawing millions of tourists each year, also aligns perfectly with India's growing outbound tourism sector. Indian travellers are increasingly seeking new cultural experiences, and Kyoto's temples, shrines, and historical landscapes can offer that. At the same time, India's rich and diverse cultural heritage presents a significant attraction for Japanese tourists. By enhancing connectivity and developing joint tourism initiatives, we can build a strong tourism bridge between our countries.

11. The film industry also offers great potential for collaboration. Kyoto's stunning landscapes and traditional architecture make it an ideal location for Indian filmmakers. Likewise, India's large film industry can generate opportunities for joint productions and cultural exchange.

12. Human resources is another important area. India's young and highly skilled workforce can be a valuable asset for Kyoto's industries. I am happy to share with you that during his visit to India, H.E. Mr Fukushima Nukaga, Hon'ble Speaker of House of Representatives announced the target of bringing 50,000 Indian workers to Japan.

**Friends,**

13. Once again, I sincerely thank His Excellency Mr. Takatoshi Nishiwaki, Governor of Kyoto Prefecture, and the distinguished delegation for being here today. I also extend my gratitude to the Chairman of the Kyoto Assembly and the Diet members for their participation. I am confident that today's discussions will provide valuable insights into potential collaborations across various sectors between our two countries.

Thank you.

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