

**Embassy of India  
Tokyo  
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**Remarks by Ambassador H.E. Mr Sibi George at the Launch of SME  
Facilitation Cell on 11 July 2023**

- **Mr. Kazushige Nobutani, President, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)**
- **Ms. Manmeet Nanda, MD & CEO of Invest India and Joint Secretary, Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade**
- **Mr. Shailesh Pathak, Secretary General of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)**
- **Distinguished guests, esteemed representatives from the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) sector of Japan**
- **Ladies and gentlemen**

Good evening and a warm welcome!

- I thank you for your attendance today as we mark a significant step forward in strengthening economic cooperation between India and Japan.
- Relations between India and Japan have a long history rooted in spiritual affinity and strong cultural and civilizational ties. Today our ties have transformed into a Special Strategic and Global Partnership encompassing cooperation in a wide range of areas.
- In the economic domain, we have robust bilateral cooperation. From being the fifth largest investor in India to supporting flagship infrastructure development projects such as the High Speed Railways and Metro, Japan is an important economic partner for India. Government of Japan and Japanese industry have been playing a significant role in India's developmental journey.

Friends,

- I would like to see our economic engagement to deepen and strengthen further. Today there are around 1500 Japanese companies in India. I would like to see this number increase to 15,000. In this endeavour, Small and Medium Enterprises from Japan will play a critical role. With this in mind, I have been placing a special emphasis on reaching out to Japanese SMEs and to tell them of the economic transformation happening in India and invite them to take advantage of the opportunities available in India.
- Today, it gives me immense pleasure to announce the launch of the Small and Medium Enterprises Facilitation Cell here in the Embassy of India which will boost our efforts in this direction.
- This initiative is the result of dedicated efforts to enhance bilateral economic cooperation between India and Japan, with a particular focus on facilitating the entry of Japanese SMEs in India.
- The Cell that is being launched today is designed to be the first stop for Japanese SMEs interested in establishing their businesses and investing in the diverse, rapidly growing Indian market.
- We aim to provide comprehensive support with the collaboration of both private and public business and investment promotion agencies.
- India, as one of the world's fastest-growing economies, offers a plethora of opportunities, especially in the domains of technology, manufacturing, healthcare, and services.
- India has been consistently improving its business environment with progressive policy reforms, increased ease of doing business and improved infrastructure.
- Japanese SMEs can immensely benefit from the cost-effective labour, vast market access, and strategic geographic location that India offers.
- The Facilitation Cell will provide insights about market trends, regulatory guidelines, and potential business partnerships.
- In its efforts, the Cell will also take support from business facilitation agencies such as JETRO, Invest India and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry to provide all possible help to Japanese SMEs.

- As we facilitate increased business ties, we reinforce the Special Strategic and Global Partnership between our nations.
- This strategic collaboration is not limited to economic cooperation alone, but extends to addressing global challenges, promoting peace, stability, and development in the Indo-Pacific region.
- The launch of the SME Facilitation Cell signifies a renewed commitment to fostering stronger economic ties and enhancing mutual prosperity.
- Let us work together to leverage this opportunity, strengthening the bond between India and Japan, fostering growth and progress for our SMEs, and building a future that serves the best interests of both our nations.
- Thank you for your presence today, and we look forward to your continued support and engagement.

Thank you.

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