

**Embassy of India
Tokyo

**Remarks by Ambassador Sibi George at the Celebrating
G 20 JWG on Tourism event in Srinagar at Embassy of India, Tokyo
May 31, 2023**

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Good Afternoon,
Welcome to all to the Embassy.

I am so delighted to attend this event today which is a combination of three elements, India's G 20 Presidency, Celebrating India's G 20 Tourism event held in Srinagar in Jammu & Kashmir and the Odisha folkdance festival. This is also the first event that we organize in the Embassy after the visit of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi to Hiroshima for the G 7 summit. One of the important element of the visit was to unveil a bust of Mahatma Gandhi in Hiroshima. I invite you all to visit the bust of Mahatma Gandhi in Hiroshima during your next visit to that city.

Dear Friends,

As you all are aware, India assumed the G20 Presidency on December 1, 2022 at a challenging time, when the world is looking at the G20 with hope. You are all aware that the G20 brings together the 20 major economies of the world. They represent 85% of the global GDP, 75% of international trade and two-thirds of the world's population. So, this is a gathering of extraordinary importance. And one that in many ways, unparalleled in our history. There are almost 200 meetings at various other levels, from Ministers and officials to domain experts, civil society and of course, the youth. G20 meetings are held not as a Delhi-centric set of events, but one that is celebrated across the width and breadth of our country. It enables the world to

know better the fullness of India's extraordinary diversity and rich heritage.

In our embassy we have been organizing regular events to celebrate India's G 20 presidency. This is the one such meeting on G - 20 that the Mission is organizing in Tokyo to spread the message of G-20. Today we would focus on the G 20 Joint Working Group meeting held in Srinagar in Jammu and Kashmir, one of the most beautiful States of India. We have a separate presentation on this. We look forward to meeting you in our forthcoming meetings as well.

Now coming to the special show of Odisha folk festival today, let me say this. Odisha is India's best kept secret which is like a hidden gem for all visitors to India. It is a gifted serene landscape with uncrowded and unspoilt beaches. It's a land steeped in history and mythology with its many ancient temples, tribal cultures, and abundance of natural beauty.

I had the opportunity to visit Bhubaneswar, the capital city of Odisha, a green and clean city with rich cultural life. It is one of the major cities that enables an authentic overview of the stages of development of temple architecture, where temple building activities of unique Odishan style existed and flourished over a few thousand years. One of the historic cities in Odisha that I propose to visit during my next visit to India is Puri where the world famous Shri Jagannath Temple is located. I look forward to participating in the famous annual Ratha Yatra, or chariot festival. We will get a glimpse of the beautiful tradition of Odisha in today's festival.

I thank and congratulate all who worked hard to make today's event a successful one. Once again thank you and welcome to all.

Thank you.
