

Ambassador's Address at the 75th Republic Day of India

Osaka, 26th January 2024

Our Consul General Shri Nikhilesh Giri, Excellencies; Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very warm welcome to all.

Thank you for joining me and our Consul General Shri Nikhilesh Giri today to celebrate the 75th Republic Day of India. As Ambassador of India to Japan, I bring to you greeting from more than 1.4 billion people of India. And I welcome each one of you Excellencies, Friends of India and Indian community.

Republic Day of India commemorates the date on which the Constitution of India came into effect on January 26, 1950. A constitution which established a sovereign, democratic, republic which guarantees Justice - social, economic and political; Liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of Status and of Opportunity, and to promote among them all Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual. This constitution is the framework within which India over the last seventy-five years thrived as a democracy and today emerged as the largest democracy of the world, fifth largest economy of the world and fastest growing large economy of the world.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

India and Japan friendship has a long history, rooted in spiritual affinity and strong cultural and civilizational ties. Today, our relationship is based on the strong foundation of shared values such as democracy, freedom, and respect for rule of law. In recent years, India - Japan relationship has transformed into Special Strategic and Global partnership launched in 2014 under the visionary leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi and the former Prime Minister Late Mr. Shinzo Abe. The prophetic words 'confluence of two seas' by Late Prime Minister Abe continue to resonate when we work towards a free, open and rule based Indo-Pacific. This special

partnership continues to flourish under the leadership of current Prime Minister His Excellency KISHIDA Fumio. Today, India - Japan partnership within the bilateral and plurilateral framework like the QUAD is key to stability and freedom in Indo-Pacific which faces several challenges.

Dear Friends,

2023 has been a special year in India Japan relationship, as India and Japan served as the Chair of G20 and G7 respectively. There have been hundreds of delegations from all across the world visited India to participate in the over two hundred G 20 related meetings held all over India. Each of these delegations including those from Japan returned with one message. India has transformed. India has changed. What they saw is a New India. Its infrastructure has changed, its vision has changed, its business environment has changed. Its digital transformation is significant. Today it is world's fastest growing economy. Some of our friends, including Japanese friends used to say, India needs to become more business friendly. Dear Friends, let me tell you this, loud and clear. India has changed. It is a New India. The world is coming to India, investing in India. Today, India is a land of billion opportunities. I invite our Japanese friends to grab this opportunity.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

In my last one year in Japan, I had the great honor of visiting over forty prefectures of Japan, including the prefectures in this part of Japan. What I experienced all across Japan was an overwhelming momentum for India - Japan relationship.

Dear Friends,

Japan is among our most trusted partners, in India's journey towards Amrit Kaal, a 25-year period journey to India at 100 in 2047. Our relationship with Japan is a partnership not only between governments and officials, it is a partnership involving several stakeholders; business establishments, industry and commercial chambers, industry

groups, science and technology establishments, universities, think tanks, academicians, scholars, media houses, artists, students, innovation and research organizations, museums, libraries, Yoga and Ayurveda practitioners and above all our vibrant people to people contacts. I would like to recall the contributions of the vibrant Indian diaspora in Japan in building our excellent bilateral relations. In 2024, in coming weeks and months, I look forward to work with each one of you to take our relationship, our Special Strategic and Global Partnership forward. Once again, I thank the dignitaries, distinguished guests and all for joining me in these celebrations.

Thank you.
