

**Embassy of India  
Tokyo**

**Address of Ambassador for India-Japan Skill Connect Conference  
August 4, 2023**

His Excellency, Mr Rajeev Chandrashekar, Union Minister of State for Skill Development & Entrepreneurship and Union Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India

His Excellency, Mr Takei Shunsuke, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan

His Excellency Mr Shogo Azemoto, Parliamentary Vice Minister, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Government of Japan

His Excellency Mr. Yasuhiro Takami, Parliamentary Vice Minister, Ministry of Justice, Government of Japan

Shri Sheetal Kulkarni, Leader of the CII delegation from India, accompanying delegates, representatives of various Japanese Ministries, sending and receiving organizations involved in Skill development sector, members of Indian Diaspora in Japan,

Dear Friends, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is truly my pleasure to welcome you to Embassy of India for the "India-Japan Skill Connect Conference"!

I am very happy to see an overwhelming response to this initiative today when we launch our India Japan Skill Connect – Skill Facilitation Cell at the Embassy.

Much as we would have liked, Hon'ble Union Minister of State Shri Rajeev Chandrashekar Ji to travel to Japan and attend our event physically, we are very much honored by his presence, as his joining virtually from India, early morning. We look forward to your visit to Japan in near future to take forward the momentum built through today's event.

I also express my deep gratitude to the Government of Japan as we are truly honored by the presence of His Excellency, Mr Takei Shunsuke, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs; His Excellency Mr Shogo Azemoto, Parliamentary Vice

Minister, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare; and His Excellency Mr. Yasuhiro Takami, Parliamentary Vice Minister, Ministry of Justice. I thank Your Excellencies for joining us today. Your esteemed presence shows the importance you attach to the skill connect and cooperation in human resources between our two countries. I thank CII and my colleagues in the Embassy for their wholehearted efforts in making today's event a success.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

Our "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" is firmly based in our civilizational connect and on the principles of democracy, freedom and rule based international order, it has scaled new heights with each passing day to reflect strengthening of our bilateral and plurilateral engagements across all sectors.

Japan is a natural partner in the growth and development of India and a strategic partner in implementation of India's Act East Policy and centerpiece of our vision for realizing a Free and Open and Inclusive and rule-based Indo-Pacific. We are also cooperating with a constructive agenda under the QUAD framework. Our engagement this year is of special significance as we hold respective Presidencies of G-7 and G-20.

Our high level engagements have kept a good pace with our leaders meeting twice in the year 2023, with Hon'ble Prime Minister of Japan His Excellency Fumio Kishida visiting India in March and Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi ji visiting Hiroshima to attend the G-7 meeting in May. Foreign Minister His Excellency Mr. Hayashi was recently in India for the 15<sup>th</sup> India-Japan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue. We look forward to the visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister of Japan to New Delhi next month for the G-20 Summit. One of the important area covered in each of our high level discussions is cooperation in Skill development and human resources, the need to fully realise the potential that this sector offers to us.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

India, with one sixth of the world's population, has a huge demographic dividend of over 65% of its population in the youth segment, with a median age of 29. This demographic dividend is a key drive of India's rapid economic growth and development. It is estimated that over 24% of the incremental global workforce over the next decade will come from India, and skill development has emerged as an important priority for India.

As you are aware, today, millions of Indians are contributing to innovation, research, economic growth and development globally, with an ever growing number of Indians at the top management level of leading public and private

sector institutions, including in leading multinational companies and industries. Let me quote from the remarks by Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji who said at the recently held event focused on "India and USA: Skilling for Future' event in Washington DC. Hon'ble Prime Minister said and I quote, "Ensuring a better future for our present and future generations is our collective responsibility. Education, skills and innovation are essential for this bright future, and in this direction, we have made several efforts in India. We have integrated education and skilling in the National Education Policy. We have established nearly 10,000 Atal Tinkering Labs in schools, where children are provided with various facilities for exploring different types of innovations. We have initiated the Start Up India Mission to encourage young entrepreneurs. Our goal is to make this decade a "Tech Decade" or Techade." Unquote.

Excellencies, Dear Friends,

India and Japan are actively working to synergies the complementarities between India and Japan in the area of skill development and human resources. I am happy to share that out of around 45,000 Indian diaspora living in Japan, 12500 are high-skilled professionals, especially in the field of IT, a quarter of the total Indian population in Japan.

Over the years we have been able to put in place various frameworks and mechanism for expanding our cooperation in this crucial sector including MoUs. And we are seeing these arrangements yielding good results, with a steady increase in the number of Indian high skilled and skilled human resources joining Japan. In the last eight months of my stay in Japan, I visited over twenty-four prefectures and met the leadership in these prefectures including Hon'ble Governors and business leaders. In each of these prefectures I was told about the requirement of more human resources and that each of these prefectures are looking for more Indian skilled work force. There is a growing appreciation of the quality service that Indian skilled workforce could bring for Japan's continuing economic growth and prosperity. In each of these prefectures I have also been able to meet a few Indian workers who are adapting well to the Japanese way of life. But we have a long way to go.

We are aware of the presence of Indian workforce all across the globe including in the US, Europe, Australia and the Gulf. I have personally experienced it during my diplomatic assignments in the Middle East, in Europe and in the United States. I am confident that in Japan too in coming months and years we will be able to have a significant increase in the number of Indian skilled human resources.

It is said that nothing can top an idea whose time has come. The time for cooperation between japan and India in the human resources sector has come.

There is demand, there is supply, there is convergence. Our political leadership, our business leadership and our people of both countries want this cooperation to flourish. Nothing can stop this idea whose time has come. What we need to do is to maintain this momentum and facilitate this movement. The purpose of launching the India – Japan Skill Connect Mechanism today is to maintain this momentum and generate more awareness on both sides. The Embassy will be organizing several events in Tokyo and in various prefectures across Japan to generate awareness and to facilitate the exchanges.

It is also time that we look seriously at entering into a Comprehensive Migration and Mobility Partnership Agreement as India has done with several countries. Because it will enable demands for skills and talents to be synchronized with their availability. Similar agreements have been recently concluded by India with Germany, France, Portugal, UK and Denmark, amongst others. It will help us to cooperatively expand our economic opportunities and meet the requirements of the global knowledge economy. Let me also be clear that as a country that seeks to utilize the global workplace to the fullest advantage, India is a strong source of legal migration and mobility. We look forward to a fair, legal and equal opportunity to demonstrate the contributions of Indian skills and talents all across the globe and in Japan.

I welcome once again all the esteemed Ministers, dignitaries and panelists and look forward to a stimulating exchange of ideas and perspective to mark today's event as an important milestone in the landscape of India-Japan bilateral relations.

Thank you and a Good Morning!

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