

Speech by H.E. Ambassador Sibi George
India-Japan Partnership : Tottori
September 9, 2025

H.E. Mr. Ryosei Akazawa, Minister In charge of Economic Revitalisation
H.E. Mr. Shinji Hirai, Governor of Tottori Prefecture
H.E. Mr. Shunji Fukuta, Chairman of Tottori Prefecture Assembly
H E Mr. Ryuji Shimatani, Chairman, Tootori Pref. Assembly India-Japan
Friendship Association
Shri R Madhu Sudan, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of India
Ms. Akiko Okumura, Executive Vice President, JETRO
Smt. Anu Garg, IAS, Development Commissioner-cum-Additional Chief
Secretary, Department of Water Resources, Government of Odisha
Prof. S. Balaram, CEO, TIMed, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical
Sciences and Technology, Trivandrum
Ms. MAYO, Tottori Prefecture, Tourism Ambassador
Mr. Taichi TANAKA, Ippo-Lab LLC, Representative Staff Member
Ms. Sujatha UG, Vice President, Invest India
Mr. Shuko OTANI, Otani Shuzo Co., Ltd. President
Ms. Mika EOKA, Founder and CEO, Mika Sake Global
Speakers from Companies from Tottori who will be making
presentation, distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen
Good Afternoon.

It is a great honor and pleasure to welcome you all to the celebration of **Tottori Day** here at the **Embassy of India in Tokyo**. The idea for this event was first discussed during my visit to Tottori last year, in my meeting with His Excellency, Governor **Mr. Shinji Hirai**. I would like to sincerely thank the Governor for his enthusiastic support in bringing this idea to life so swiftly.

Tottori is truly unique. It represents the best of **Japan's harmony with nature, innovation, and cultural heritage**. Where else can you find coral reefs, sand dunes, camels, and the majestic **Mount Daisen**, often called the "Second Mount Fuji"—all in one prefecture? Today, as we celebrate the growing bond between Tottori and India, we are not just acknowledging ties between a region and a nation. We are celebrating a friendship rooted in **shared values, mutual respect, and a common vision for the future**. As the Ambassador of India to Japan, I have had the rare privilege of visiting **all 47 prefectures** of this beautiful country. In each, I've engaged deeply with prefectural leadership, Universities and friends of India. This prefecture level

engagement reflects the strength of our bilateral ties. The recent meeting between the **Governors of several Japanese prefectures and Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi ji**, during his visit to Japan, is a powerful testament to the growing importance of prefecture-level collaboration. I especially thank Governor Hirai for traveling all the way from Tottori on very short notice for this meet. It reflects his personal commitment and the strength of this unique relationship.

Tottori, while being Japan's least populous prefecture, **stands tall** in its commitment to **sustainability, innovation, and community engagement**. These are ideals that resonate strongly with India as we strive toward **inclusive growth, digital transformation, and sustainable development**. From **culture and education to economy and technology**, the scope of collaboration is vast.

In recent years, the **India–Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership** has expanded rapidly, encompassing key areas such as **digital technology, space, defense, climate resilience, clean energy, and beyond**. But the real strength of this partnership lies in how **local stories and regional connections** like Tottori–India give life to our shared goals.

This is clearly reflected in today's event—with booths set-up by Japanese companies showcasing their products and services, and presentations from Indian stakeholders highlighting areas for potential collaboration. These are not abstract ideas; they are **practical pathways** to mutual growth.

Looking ahead, I envision a **stronger Tottori–India partnership**, where: Tottori-based companies explore opportunities in India's vast and dynamic market; Indian startups and researchers collaborate with institutions in Tottori on cutting-edge innovations; And our young people engage in **educational and cultural exchanges**, sharing language, creativity, and ideas to build a better-connected world.

This year, we are also celebrating the **India–Japan Year of Science, Technology and Innovation Exchange**. I believe Tottori Prefecture has immense potential to accelerate collaboration with India in a variety of STI areas—from smart agriculture to clean energy and advanced manufacturing.

Let me emphasize: partnerships like this are not built overnight. They are built with **trust, sustained effort, open hearts**, and a **genuine desire to learn from one another**. I want to sincerely thank the Government of Tottori Prefecture, its people, and all our Indian stakeholders for their continued commitment to nurturing this relationship. Also special thanks to Chairman of Prefecture Assembly and the Chairman of India-Tottori Friendship Group in nurturing this relationship.

Let us carry this momentum forward. The possibilities are truly endless. Before I close, I want to share a personal moment that touched me deeply: during my maiden visit to Tottori, I was warmly welcomed with a banner in **Hindi**, saying: "**Tottori Prefecture mein aapka swagat hai**" — *Welcome to Tottori Prefecture.*

It was a heartwarming gesture—one I will never forget.

Thank you, Tottori, for your **partnership**, your **hospitality**, and your **friendship**. While I may leave, but partnership will live and flourish for many years to come.

Thank you.
