

**Speech by Ambassador Nagma M. Mallick at
Christmas celebrations on 22 December 2025**

Dear friends,

Namaste, Good evening, Konnichiwa.

It gives me great pleasure to join you this evening on the occasion of Christmas celebrations.

Christmas began as a religious observance, marking the birth of Jesus Christ. However, Over time its meaning expanded beyond faith and it came to be associated with values that are widely shared such as kindness, compassion and care for others. As communities moved and interacted across regions and continents, the celebration of Christmas travelled with them, taking root in different societies.

In India, Christmas has been observed for several centuries and has naturally become part of the country's social and cultural life. While it holds deep religious significance for the Christian community and is marked with devotion and reverence, it is also widely shared as a social celebration. Over time, it has found its place within India's plural society, where diverse traditions have long coexisted with openness and mutual respect.

Here in Japan, the approach of Christmas is felt well before the day itself. Over the past months, I have seen cities gradually light up with seasonal illuminations, creating an atmosphere of quiet anticipation. One also senses how people look forward to this time of year as an occasion to pause, spend time with family, and share moments of togetherness, adding a special warmth to the season.

In many ways, the spirit of Christmas reminds us of the importance of understanding, connection and respect, principles that also shape how India engages with the world and finds natural expression in India's close and evolving relationship with Japan. Rooted in mutual respect, shared democratic values and a deep appreciation of culture and tradition, the India–Japan partnership continues to grow in trust, cooperation, and enduring friendship.

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On this occasion, I would like to thank our Japanese friends and the Indian diaspora for their continued friendship and support. Your presence this evening reflects the strong people-to-people ties that underpin our relationship.

As the year draws to a close, the Christmas season offers us a moment of calm reflection amid our busy lives. May the warmth of this season continue to guide us into the New Year, strengthening our friendships and encouraging us to move forward together with renewed purpose.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a very happy New Year.

Thank you.
