

**Embassy of India
Tokyo**

**Remarks by Ambassador Sibi George at the
Odisha Festival at VCC, Embassy of India, Tokyo
Nov 23, 2022**

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

I am so delighted to attend the Odisha Festival today.

Odisha, a great State of India that needs no introduction. It 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.

2. 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.

Dear Friends,

3. Odisha is also one of the fastest growing States of India with its economy registering a sharp recovery in 2021-22 with a growth rate of 10.1%. Odisha's industries are based mainly on its natural resources which is more than 35% of country's natural resources. The state has significant reserves of iron ore, bauxite, nickel, coal, etc. which makes it

an attractive destination for mineral-based industries. In 2020-21, over 47% of mineral production in India was from the State of Odisha.

4. Today, the State is on the cusp of an information and communication technology revolution. I see a great opportunity for our Japanese business to deepen their engagement with Odisha. I invite our Japanese business partners to explore Odisha and also include it in their tourism itinerary. Odisha indeed is a very good destination for our 3Ts engagement, Trade, Technology and Tourism.

Dear Friends,

5. One of the most important cultural contributions of Odisha to the world is the classical art form of Odissi dance. Odissi is the oldest surviving dance form in India on the basis of archaeological evidence. It has a long, unbroken tradition of 2,000 years, and finds mention in the Natyashastra of Bharatamuni, believed to be written 200 BC.

6. I am happy to welcome today the vibrant members of the Indian community who are here in Japan from the State of Odisha.

7. I extend my appreciation to Ms Kazuko Yasunobu, the teacher of Odissi dance at VCC, for coming forward to collaborate with us for the event. I also congratulate her for completing 15 years of her association with the EOI, Tokyo and thank her for her contributions in keeping the Indian culture alive in Japan!

Thank you.
