

REPUBLIC DAY OF INDIA

India, Japan close partners looking to the future

By Hemant Krishan Singh
Indian Ambassador

On the happy occasion of the Republic Day of India, I extend the cordial greetings of the people of India to Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress as well as to the government and friendly people of Japan. I also send felicitations to my fellow citizens and persons of Indian origin living in Japan.

India and Japan share civilizational bonds and an Asian identity. Our open societies cherish individual freedoms and respect for pluralism under the rule of law. We also share a commitment to democracy that fosters development, promotes human rights and ensures harmony within and between societies. These common values provide the basis for mutual goodwill among our peoples and underpin the bipartisan political support in both our countries for the advancement of bilateral relations. As a new Asia emerges in the 21st century, India and Japan stand together in their determination to bring security and prosperity to our peoples, the region and the world.

The transformation of India-Japan relations to realize their true potential has long been the vision of Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh. The landmark visit by Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama to India in December 2009 for the annual bilateral summit has imparted continuity and further momentum to the India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership, which has been elevated to a new stage. It has confirmed our pursuit of the future as close partners. The agreed Action Plan for Security Cooperation will strengthen coordination on strategic and security issues. Decisions reached at the summit on enhanced economic partnership, including India-Japan flagship projects for the 21st century—the Dedicated Freight Corridor West and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor—will bring enormous benefits to the peoples of both India and Japan. Our leaders have mandated the early conclusion of a CEPA/EPA (comprehensive economic



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President Pratibha Devisingh Patil

partnership arrangement and economic partnership agreement).

People-to-people exchanges have been further enhanced through joint collaboration in the development of the Indian Institute of Technology Hyderabad, India's revival of the Nalanda University as a regional center of learning and the establishment of a chair on Indian studies at Tokyo University.

India and Japan have also affirmed their commitment to work together for the development of an open and inclusive architecture for regional integration in Asia. Cooperation on the vital global issues of counterterrorism, disarmament, climate change and U.N. reform has been reinforced.

Over the past 60 years, India's political, social and economic institutions, which are the embodiment of our republic, have grown in strength and maturity. We have successfully overcome daunting challenges to emerge as a nation confident of maintaining a sustained growth path that improves the livelihood of our citizens while expanding India's integration with the global community.

Despite the global economic downturn, India's economy has continued to grow briskly based on the strength of domestic demand, savings, investment and enter-



Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh

prise. We are confident that in 2010 this trend will continue and India's economy will return to its even higher growth trajectory of recent years. Given this positive outlook, mutually beneficial India-Japan economic relations will continue to intensify. Together, our countries can synergize their respective strengths and provide a much needed impetus to the global economy.

The new building of the Indian Embassy and its Cultural Centre, inaugurated in 2009, is a fitting symbol of India's rapidly expanding bilateral relations with Japan. With its ample facilities, the embassy is ready to partner the Japanese public and members of the Indian community in promoting economic, social and cultural ties between our two countries. The launch of the Indian Chamber of Commerce Japan, Tokyo is another significant step in the growing contributions of the Indian community to India-Japan relations.

I am confident that the coming year will see further enhancement of the close bonds of friendship between India and Japan. We look forward to working closely with the Japanese government, business and industry and the public at large to realize the common desire of our two great peoples for universal peace, progress and prosperity.

Partners on the global stage

By Yoshiro Mori
Chairman of the Japan-India Association

On the occasion of the 61st Republic Day of India, I wish to convey to the government and people of India the warmest congratulations from all the members of the Japan-India Association, which I represent.

I am gratified to note that last year again witnessed the increasing might of India, both political and economic, on the international stage as well as the accelerated development of the relationship between Japan and India in all its aspects.

I would like to stress that in spite of the change of government in Japan, our relations continue to flourish. Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama managed to make a visit to India late in the year, honoring the two govern-

ments' commitment to alternate visits by the prime ministers as specified in the framework of the Japan-India Strategic Global Partnership.

I also am happy to note that two big projects between our two countries, namely the construction of the Delhi-Mumbai Dedicated Freight Corridor and the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor, have reached the stage of implementation and that other Japanese ODA projects in India, including subway system construction projects in Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata and Delhi, are all on the right track. To be noted also is the increase of Japanese direct investment to India, which resulted in the presence of about 630 Japanese companies around India as of 2009.

As both prime ministers, Mr. Hatoyama and Dr. Manmohan Singh, agreed in December in New Delhi to accelerate the negotiations for the expedited conclusion of the Japan-India Economic Partnership Agreement, I hope the EPA will be concluded as soon as possible so that our lagging mutual trade will be able to leap forward.

An increasing number of Indian IT engineers and other business people visit and live in Japan. There exist already a few im-

portant clusters of Indians in Japan, in such places as Nishi-Kasai, in eastern Tokyo, and Yokohama and Kobe. Indian restaurants are appearing one after another in major cities throughout Japan.

Cooperation in science and technology, too, is gaining further momentum. Cultural exchanges between the two countries are expanding and deepening. The promised project to launch a new IIT in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh, is moving ahead. On the multilateral front, our two countries are destined to jointly contribute to the global community by working together toward the solution of such global issues as nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the curbing of climate change and reform of the U.N. Security Council.

The Japan-India Association, with its 107 years of history and spirit of dedication, is determined to work to further improve of our very important relationship.

On this auspicious occasion, let me pray that the excellent Japan-India relationship brings more happiness to our two peoples and that the two nations contribute to the peace and prosperity of the international community at large.



Yoshiro Mori



Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama, left, and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh address a joint press conference at Hyderabad House in New Delhi on Dec. 29 at the end of Hatoyama's three-day visit to India.