

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE DAY

Air India flying high on economic growth

Air India, the national flag carrier of India, is flying high of late in terms of business performance thanks to the country's thriving economy.

"We're benefiting from the growing Indian economy," Ujjwal Ghosh, the airline's manager for east Japan, said.

"This has been visible in terms of increased traffic and yield for the last few months in particular."

Indian Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, according to reports from India, said in a speech he delivered in early July that his country was poised to achieve double-digit growth in the next two years. "If the monsoon this year is favorable, then we'll get 8.5 percent (in 2010) and 9 percent-plus next year, and double-digit growth thereafter in a sustainable manner," he was quoted as saying.

Ghosh, for his part, noted: "Inbound tourism is steadily growing. Airport facilities are being upgraded, as in the case of Terminal 3 of Delhi Airport. The number of hotels is increasing, and more flights to various places in India as well as foreign countries are being planned."

On July 3, the new 500,000-square-meter terminal at Delhi Airport, which is expected to handle 34 million passengers a year, was inaugurated. "An airport is often the first introduction to a country. A good airport will signal a new India, committed to joining the ranks of modern industrialized nations," Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh was quoted as saying at the open-



Ujjwal Ghosh



Delhi Airport opened Terminal 3 in July to cope with the rapid growth of air traffic to and from India.

Courtesy of Air India

ing ceremony.

Direct investment from Japan has increased sharply in recent years. The Air India representative in Tokyo said, "The deepening of Japan-India economic relations will surely result in greater traffic volumes between the two countries as collaboration between Japanese and Indian companies keeps gaining momentum."

Air India currently operates direct flights

from Narita to Delhi on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays, and from Kansai International Airport to Delhi via Hong Kong on Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays. The airline has upgraded its aircraft on the India-Japan routes to state-of-the-art Boeing 777-200 LR aircraft.

Asked if the airline is planning to introduce new measures to attract more India-bound

tourists from Japan, Ghosh said, "Air India is considering enhancing its operations to daily frequency in the near future, in accordance with fleet availability."

He said, "Our on-time performance from Narita during the April-July period this year was 97.1 percent."

Air India plans to join the Star Alliance in March 2011.

Bilateral business opportunities to surge

By Ryuko Hira

Hon. President of IMAY & ICCJ-Tokyo

On behalf of the members of the Shadan Hojin Indian Merchants Association of Yokohama (IMAY) and the Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Japan Tokyo (ICCJ), I convey our heartfelt felicitations on the 63rd anniversary of the Independence Day of India. Although IMAY was established 89 years ago, we recently established ICCJ with the support of the Embassy of India in Tokyo. With its launch, the long-felt desire of Indian enterprises operating in Japan to have their own comprehensive and professional apex chamber of

commerce has been finally been realized.

ICCJ Tokyo has been supplementing the Embassy of India's efforts to promote India-Japan economic engagement, and aims to provide support, guidance and advisory services to interested parties to enable them to take full advantage of the potential for business between Japan and India.



Ryuko Hira

Some of ICCJ's major achievements during the year have been signing a memorandum with the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) to exchange information on economic and commercial matters, and successful campaigns for investment in the Indian Highways Infrastructure Program mega-project.

According to a recent survey covering 620 Japanese manufacturing companies, India remains the second-most popular investment destination for Japanese companies after China. Fifty-eight percent of the companies surveyed wanted to do business with India in the medium term. The survey reflects Japan-

ese companies' mounting interest in Indian businesses, especially in such sectors as automobiles, information technology, infrastructure, steel, power and pharmaceuticals. Hence there will be a surge in bilateral trade, investment and business opportunities between the two leading economies of Asia.

I recall the president of India's message on the eve of 60th anniversary of our Independence Day: "As we watch the tri-color unfurl tomorrow morning, let us all hold our heads high with pride and confidence, and look ahead with optimism towards a better and brighter future for our great nation."

Jai Hind

(Advertisement)



The Samrat restaurant in the Seno Building in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo.

Peace for progress, prosperity

By Yog Kapoor

Owner of the Samrat Indian restaurant chain

On this happy occasion today, we celebrate the Independence Day of India, a great historical day in the world, and offer homage to the father of the nation, the great Mahatma Gandhi, who used to say that violence produces only violence, destruction and poverty. Mahatma Gandhi cannot be regarded merely as a figure of the past; his thoughts hold very true in the contemporary world.

Today the world is passing through an "eclipse" of violence, the threat of nuclear weapons and the hunger for them, global financial crises and stress, all of which were created by human beings themselves.

But the sunshine will come again if the whole world works together to bring peace. Let's live peacefully and let's live with others with peace and prosperity in this beautiful world.

The world should not forget Hiroshima, which was destroyed in 1945. The result was destruction and destruction only. Now nobody wants another Hiroshima in this beautiful world.

India has been displaying remarkable eco-

omic growth since the establishment of the Congress Party of Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mrs. Sonia Gandhi. The government is very stable now.

Japan should promote an economic alliance and security cooperation with India and strengthen the bilateral relationship from a strategic perspective.

India has an attractive economic market for advanced nations. Investors do not have to worry about their investment because India has a big population second to China in the world, India has never taken its manufacturing and factories out of the country because it's a huge country rich in natural resources with very strong domestic demand, and people have buying power as well. In India the saturation point is very far away and the "bubble" will not burst for a few decades to come.

The number of Japanese companies that have advanced into India has tripled in the past few years. It is important for Japan to implement economic assistance for large-scale projects and to accelerate its negotiations for an economic partnership with a trustworthy nation like India that is playing a constructive role befitting its new status as a major power.

Trading with India is a healthy business choice.

Japan has advanced technology and India has great manpower and spending power as well. I think if they work together, the day is not far away when East Asia will drastically change, contributing to peace and prosperity in the world.



Yog Kapoor