

## **INDIA-JAPAN RELATIONS**

### **Historical background**

India's relations with Japan are singularly free of any kind of dispute - ideological, cultural or territorial. It is unique and one of warmth emanating from generous gestures and sentiments of standing by each other at times of need.

2. Exchanges between India and Japan are said to have begun in the 6th century A.D., when Buddhism was introduced to Japan. Indian culture, filtered through Buddhism, has impacted on Japanese culture and thought, and this is the source of Japanese people's sense of closeness with India. Direct exchange in the modern era, however, began only in the Meiji era (1868-1912), when Japan embarked on the process of modernization.

3. Japan's image in India has historically been positive, going back to the early 20th century when its emergence as a big power was interpreted by India as the beginning of Asian resurgence. Japanese support and assistance to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army (INA) continue to shape popular thinking about Japan.

4. The immediate post independence experience was no less positive, with the Tokyo tribunal, waiving of reparations, conclusion of a separate Peace Treaty, the Asian Games and extension of yen loans. This spirit was visible as well in 1991, in Japan's support during India's balance of payments crisis.

5. In 1949 Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru gifted an Indian elephant to the Ueno Zoo, in Tokyo. This brought a ray of light into the lives of the Japanese children suffering from the aftermath of World War II. The elephant, named Indira after Nehru's daughter, died of old age in August 1983. Her death was widely covered in the Japanese Press.

6. In the collective Indian perception, there was a strong admiration for Japan's post-war economic reconstruction and subsequent rapid growth. This was reaffirmed a generation later by the unique role of Maruti-Suzuki in revolutionizing industrial technology and management concepts in the pre-economic reform India. Somewhere in Indian thinking was embedded respect for a society which engaged the world on its own terms and preserved its unique character through a process of upheaval and change.

7. The intuitive feeling about Japan was one of friendliness and it was not without reason that Japan consistently ranked as the most admired nation in Indian newspaper polls for a number of years.

8. Popular goodwill in both societies has been a notable element in the relationship. In Japan, it is not uncommon to hear politicians refer warmly to India's declaration of mourning at the time of demise of the Showa Emperor. Japanese businessmen active in steel, textiles or trading are nostalgic as they recall their

Indian connections during the reconstruction period. Even varied sections of the intelligentsia saw much good in our society - the traditionalists as the source of Buddhism, the philosophers and academics as a great intellectual tradition, the post war centre-left admired the Nehruvian approach, while the right wing still kept alive memories of the INA. Surprisingly, the most pervasive Indian presence was gastronomic, through a Japanese concoction known as 'curry rice'.

9. Since diplomatic relations between Japan and India were established in 1952, the two countries have enjoyed cordial relations based on trade and economic and technical cooperation. The cultural agreement between Japan and India was signed in 1956 and took effect the following year. In 1951, India established a scholarship system for overseas students. This system to this day provides an opportunity for young Japanese scholars who are today in the forefront of Indian studies to study in India.

10. Cultural exchanges picked up in the 1980s with Japanese local governments becoming involved in exchange activities with their Indian counterparts and traditional Indian performing arts being shown in Japan. The Japan Month was held in October and November 1987. Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi attended the April 1988 opening ceremony of the Festival of India. In January 1994, the Japan Foundation opened an office in New Delhi that is actively engaged in cultural exchanges since 1978. Japan has been extending cultural grant-in-aid to research institutes, universities, and cultural faculties to encourage their activities. In addition, through the UNESCO/Japan Trust Fund for Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage, Japan is helping with the preservation and restoration of the Buddhist monuments of Sanchi and Satdhara by sending experts and in other ways.

11. At the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Japan and India resolved to take their bilateral relationship to a qualitatively new level. Both realize that the current international situation, characterized by inter-dependence and the advent of globalization, offers fresh opportunities to both India and Japan for enhanced engagement for mutual benefit. The foundation for this was laid when Mr. Yoshiro Mori, the then Prime Minister of Japan and Mr. Atal Behari Vajpayee, the then Prime Minister of India agreed during the Japanese Prime Minister's landmark visit to India in August 2000 to establish the "Global Partnership in the 21st Century".

12. Today, India and Japan share a global vision of peace, stability and shared prosperity, based on sustainable development. Shared democratic values and commitment to human rights, pluralism, open society, and the rule of law underpin the global partnership between the two countries. The global partnership between India and Japan reflects a broad convergence of their long-term political, economic and strategic interests, aspirations, objectives and concerns. Japan and India view each other as partners that have responsibility for, and are capable of, responding to global and regional challenges in keeping with their global partnership. A strong, prosperous and dynamic India is, therefore, in the interest of Japan and vice versa. In the above context and in view of the current international situation, it has been decided to reinforce the strategic focus of the global partnership between Japan and India.

13. Japan and India are partners in peace, with a common interest in and complementary responsibility for promoting the security, stability and prosperity of Asia as well as in advancing international peace and equitable development. It was agreed during the visit of the then Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in April 2005 that the two countries would further strengthen their cooperation and pursue an all round and comprehensive development of bilateral relations, with a particular and urgent focus on strengthening economic ties, through full utilization of the existing and potential complementarities in their economies. It was decided that both the countries would strive to develop closer dialogue and collaboration to secure peace, stability and prosperity in Asia, promote democracy and development, and explore a new architecture for closer regional cooperation in Asia. It was also agreed that the two countries would strengthen cooperation in diverse areas such as environment, energy, disarmament, non-proliferation and security, taking advantage of, and further building on, their strategic convergences.

### **Annual Summits**

14. Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an official visit to Japan from December 13 to 16, 2006 at the invitation of the then Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe. The visit took place against the backdrop of a marked upturn in India-Japan relations, particularly since former Prime Minister Koizumi's visit in 2005. During the visit, the two Prime Ministers launched the India-Japan Friendship Year 2007 and attended the inaugural event of the Festival of India in Japan on December 14, 2006. A Joint Statement - Towards India Japan Strategic and Global Partnership - was signed by the two Prime Ministers.

15. The dynamic growth of this relationship is reflected in the number of high level ministerial and parliamentary exchanges that have been taking place at regular intervals. There is a parallel process of business and industry in both countries taking note of the opportunities that recent economic developments in India have created for them. That has led to a very sharp increase in exchange of business delegations.

16. Former Prime Minister of Japan Mr. Shinzo Abe, accompanied by his spouse, Mrs. Akie Abe, visited India from 21-23 August 2007. A Joint Statement on "the Roadmap for New Dimensions to the Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan" and a Joint Statement on the Enhancement of Cooperation on Environmental Protection and Energy Security were signed. Mr. Abe visited Kolkata and attended the opening ceremony of the India - Japan Cultural Centre. Chief Minister of West Bengal called on Mr. Abe.

17. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh visited Japan for the G-8 Summit from 7-9 July 2008. He participated in the G-5 Leaders' meeting on 8 July, G-8, G-5 and MEM meetings on 9 July and a BRICs meeting on 9 July. He had a bilateral meeting with PM Fukuda on 9 July.

18. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an Official Working Visit to Tokyo from 21-23 October 2008. This was Indian PM's second bilateral visit to Japan as Prime Minister, and was part of our regular annual summit which has been agreed between the two countries and which has been carrying on every year since then.

PM and Smt. Gursharan Kaur had an audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan. He held extensive talks with Prime Minister Mr. Taro Aso. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry called on PM. Leaders from the New Komeito Party and the Democratic Party of Japan also called on PM. He had a breakfast meeting with Mr. Yoshiro Mori, former Prime Minister and President of Japan India Association and Mr. Shinzo Abe, former PM. He attended a reception in his honour by the Japan-India Association and the Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League. Former PM Mr. Yoshiro Mori, Former PM Mr. Yasuo Fukuda and Dr. Taro Nakayama, President of Japan-India Parliamentary Friendship League were present at the reception. PM addressed a business luncheon hosted by Nippon Keidanren. The second India-Japan Business Leaders' Forum was held and recommendations by the Forum were presented to the Prime Ministers. A Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and a Joint Statement on the Advancement of Strategic and Global Partnership between India and Japan were signed.

19. Former Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama visited India for the Annual Summit from 27 to 29 December 2009. A Joint Statement on "New Stage of Japan-India Strategic and Global Partnership" was signed. Both the Prime Ministers expressed satisfaction at the deepening of the Annual Strategic Dialogue between the Foreign Ministers, as well as other policy dialogues at Ministerial level. PM Hatoyama also held meetings with businessmen including those of Japanese corporations operating in India. He also met with Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, President of the Indian National Congress Party.

20. PM Dr. Manmohan Singh paid an Official Working Visit to Tokyo from 24-26 October, 2010 for the Annual Bilateral Summit. This landmark visit has imparted a further momentum and continuity to the India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership. PM accompanied by Smt. Gursharan Kaur had an audience with Their Majesties the Emperor and the Empress of Japan. He also held extensive talks, both at restricted and delegation level, with Prime Minister Mr. Naoto Kan. Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan called on PM. Opposition Leaders from Liberal Democratic Party, New Komeito Party and Your Party also called on PM.

21. Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda and Mrs. Hitomi Noda paid a State visit to India from 27-29 December 2011. During the visit, PM Noda delivered an address at the Indian Council for World Affairs (ICWA) and attended a luncheon meeting hosted by the apex chambers of commerce and industry. He also called on the Vice President of India and held a Summit meeting with Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh, followed by a joint press conference and a banquet hosted by the PM. The two Prime Ministers also signed a Joint Statement entitled "Vision for the Enhancement of Japan-India Strategic and Global Partnership" upon entering the year of the 60th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

### **Annual Strategic Dialogues**

22. EAM Shri Pranab Mukherjee visited Japan from 22-23 March 2007 for the first Annual Strategic Dialogue. He exchanged views with FM Aso on bilateral relations, regional and international issues. EAM also called on PM Shinzo Abe

during the visit. FM Mr. Masahiko Koumura visited India on 4-5 August 2008 for the second Annual Strategic Dialogue. EAM Shri S. M. Krishna visited Japan from 3-5 July 2009 for the third Annual Strategic Dialogue. He had a fruitful exchange of views with FM Nakasone on bilateral issues as well as various regional & international issues. He also called on PM Taro Aso. During his visit, EAM also inaugurated the new chancery building of the Embassy. The negotiations on a Civil Nuclear Cooperation for the peaceful use of nuclear energy started in Tokyo in June 2010. On 21 August 2010, FM Okada visited India to attend the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Strategic Dialogue and held discussions on a wide range of issues including bilateral, regional and global issues with EAM Shri S.M. Krishna. He also called on Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh during the visit. EAM Shri S.M. Krishna, accompanied by an official delegation, visited Japan from 28-30 October 2011 for the 5th Annual Strategic Dialogue. Foreign Minister Gemba, accompanied by METI Minister Edano, visited India from 29-30 April 2012 for participating in the 6th India-Japan Strategic Dialogue and the first India-Japan Ministerial-level Economic dialogue and 2<sup>nd</sup> Japan-India Multilateral Business Government Dialogue.

### **Defence Dialogues**

23. Defence Minister Shri A. K. Antony visited Japan from 8-10 November, 2009 and met his Japanese counterpart Mr. Toshimi Kitazawa for a comprehensive review of Defence cooperation issues. He again visited Japan for the India-Japan Defence Ministers' meeting on 2-3 November 2011.

### **Two-plus-Two Dialogues**

24. As agreed by the Prime Ministers of both India and Japan at the Annual Summit in December 2009, the 1<sup>st</sup> India-Japan 2+2 Dialogue was held in New Delhi in July 2010. The 2<sup>nd</sup> India-Japan 2+2 Dialogue was held on 22 October 2012 in Tokyo. Both sides exchanged views on wide ranging issues including bilateral, global and regional issues.

### **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement**

25. On 16 February 2011, the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement was signed by Minister of Commerce and Industry Mr. Anand Sharma and Japanese Foreign Minister Mr. Seiji Maehara. A Joint Statement "Vision for India-Japan Strategic and Global Partnership in the Next Decade" and a Joint Declaration on the India-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) were signed by the two Prime Ministers in Tokyo in October 2010.

### **Parliamentary Exchanges**

26. Speaker of Lok Sabha Smt. Meira Kumar, accompanied by a Parliamentary delegation visited Japan from 2-6 October 2011 at the invitation of the Japanese Diet. During the visit, she visited Kobe, Hiroshima and Tokyo. In Kobe, she met with the small Indian community and interacted with them. In Hiroshima, she visited the Peace Memorial and the Peace Museum. In Tokyo, she had interactive meetings with the Speaker of the House of Representatives Mr. Takahiro

Yokomichi, an audience with Their Majesties and a call on the Prime Minister Mr. Yoshihiko Noda.

27. Under the parliamentary exchanges programme between India and Japan, a delegation of India-Japan Parliamentary Forum consisting of six Members of Parliament visited Japan from 25 September to 1 October 2011, and another delegation of six Members of Parliament, sponsored by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation also visited Japan from 16-22 October, 2011.

### **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations**

28. There have been exchanges of several bilateral visits in 2012, being the 60th anniversary of the establishment of India-Japan diplomatic relations. Minister of Tourism, Shri Subodh Kant Sahai visited Japan from 5-8 February 2012 to attend the inaugural ceremony of the 63rd international Snow Festival at Sapporo, Hokkaido. During the visit, he called on the Governor of Hokkaido and hosted an "India Evening" in connection with the inauguration of the Sapporo Snow Festival where a replica of Taj Mahal was built by the Hokkaido Broadcasting Corporation. He again visited Japan from 16-20 April 2012 to attend the 12th World Meet with Tourism Stakeholders in Osaka.

### **India's assistance during the March 11 Earthquake & Tsunami**

29. In the wake of the devastation caused by the magnitude 9.0 earthquake and the subsequent tsunami on 11 March in north-eastern and eastern Japan, letters of condolence and sympathy were sent by PM and EAM to their counterparts in Japan. PM made a statement in Parliament on 14 March expressing 'full solidarity' for the people of Japan. Relief material consisting of 25,000 blankets, 10,000 bottles of mineral water and 10 tons of high-energy biscuits were sent to Japan. A 46-member Indian Relief and Rehabilitation Team from the National Disaster Management Authority was dispatched to Japan. The highly specialized team carried out relief operations in the coastal town of Onagawa, which came under the direct impact of tsunami waves. Their work has been much appreciated by the Japanese authorities, local people and the Japanese media.

30. Japan and India are both in the process of globalizing, each of course in their own way, and responding to their compulsions. Ultimately, what is important is that the underlying sentiment is one of convergence rather than of competition. Healthy bilateral relations have a natural downstream flow in terms of international cooperation and in creating a positive ambience in the continent and beyond.

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