

# India Independence Day Special

## Ties growing from strength to strength

**STBI GEORGE**  
AMBASSADOR OF INDIA



On India's 79th Independence Day, I extend warm greetings to their majesties the emperor and the empress of Japan, the government and the people of Japan, members of the Indian community and all friends of India in Japan. India and Japan are civilizational countries whose relationship goes back millennia. The legend of Bodhidharma, an Indian monk whose legacy lives on in Japan as Daruma, embodies the spiritual and philosophical bridge between our nations. Yoga

has found deep resonance in Japan. The International Day of Yoga 2025 was celebrated in Tokyo, where over 2,500 people participated, including Madam Yoshihiko Ishiba, spouse of Prime Minister H.E. Shigeru Ishiba, and Madam Satoko Iwaya, spouse of Foreign Minister H.E. Takeshi Iwaya.

India-Japan ties have grown from strength to strength in recent times. The Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Ishiba met twice in the past year. Speaker of the Lower House H.E. Fukushima Nukaga visited India in May and two meetings were held between External Affairs Minister H.E. S. Jaishankar and Foreign Minister H.E. Takeshi Iwaya this year. Both countries are now making intensive preparations for the next annual summit.

Beyond the bilateral partnership, India and Japan cooperate in multiple multi-

lateral and plurilateral forums including the "the Quad" security dialogue group of Japan, India, Australia and the United States, the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations and the Group of Four (Japan, India, Germany and Brazil), where our interests and values align.

India and Japan share a robust economic partnership, with around 1,500 Japanese companies investing across key sectors, and India fast emerging as a manufacturing and export hub. High-level industry visits and the launch of an economic security dialogue have further deepened this collaboration.

Strengthening this momentum, the year from 2025 to 2026 has been declared the Year of Science, Technology and Innovation Exchange — reflecting our shared commitment to harnessing scientific progress for mutual growth.

India-Japan defense ties continue to strengthen with military drills like Dharma Guardian and the Japan-India Maritime Exercise, and growing strategic dialogue. Key engagements included the "two-plus-two" dialogue in August 2024 and the Defense Ministers' meeting in New Delhi in May.

Meanwhile, India's strong presence at Expo 2025 has been a highlight of the year. The India Pavilion showcases India's progress in science, space, digital innovation, wellness and culture, attracting thousands through cultural events, business forums and "One District One Product" displays.

Our regional cooperation has also witnessed sustained growth, with Japanese governors visiting India and reciprocal visits by Indian chief ministers to Japan over the past year. Institutional partnerships set up between Toyama and Andhra Pradesh,



**President Droupadi Murmu**

Yamanashi and Uttar Pradesh, and Shizuoka and Gujarat — highlight our success in connecting states and prefectures.

As we celebrate the 79th Independence Day of India, we also celebrate the enduring and evolving partnership between India and Japan. I am confident that the India-Japan partnership under the theme



**Prime Minister Narendra Modi**

of "Connecting Himalayas with Mount Fuji" will continue to flourish in the coming years.

*This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.*

## Working together to face global challenges

**YOSHIHIDE SUGA**  
CHAIRMAN, THE JAPAN-INDIA ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the Japan-India Association, I extend my congratulations to the government and people of India on the 79th Independence Day of the Republic of India.

Since its establishment in 1903 by former Prime Minister Shigenobu Okuma and Eiichi Shibusawa, the Japan-India Association has stood at the forefront of fostering friendly relations between our nations. Even after India gained independence in August 1947, your esteemed nation supported Japan's return to the international community and

helped expand our friendly ties.

The end of the Cold War in 1989, followed by India's shift in foreign policy and the initiation of drastic economic liberalization, significantly propelled Japan-India relations forward. In 2000, after various transitions, then-Prime Minister Yoshiro Mori, who served as JIA chairman until May 2022, made an official visit to India, subsequently launching the Japan-India global partnership. This relationship was further elevated to a special strategic and global partnership in 2014, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Tokyo and his meeting with then-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who succeeded Mori as JIA chairman.

We faced immense difficulties during the COVID pandemic, yet even in such trying times, our bond remained unshaken. As prime minister at the time, I am proud that Japan provided assistance to India to help our friends cope with the pandemic. Since

taking on the role of JIA chairman in 2023, I have been dedicated to further strengthening these ties.

With a commitment to promoting peace and prosperity in the region, we are working together toward the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" vision. Our nations will continue to cooperate in addressing various global challenges such as peace and stability, climate change and clean energy.

Bilateral relations have also dramatically expanded in economic cooperation, trade and investment. Japanese investment is becoming more prominent than ever across various commercial sectors in India. People-to-people exchanges are also vibrant, including cultural exchange, scholarship programs, youth exchange initiatives, tourism and efforts by local governments to establish direct contact.

On this occasion, I extend my sincere congratulations to the people of India.

## Building a strategic partnership for industrial growth

**TATSUO YASUNAGA**  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-INDIA BUSINESS COOPERATION COMMITTEE



On behalf of the Japan-India Business Cooperation Committee, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the people and government of India on the historic celebration of

India's Independence Day. Established in 1966, the JBCC aims to deepen mutual understanding between Japan and India, promote friendship and foster the development of economic relations between our countries. Since its inception, we have been committed to advancing bilateral business cooperation, trade, invest-

ment and various economic activities.

In March, we had the honor of hosting the 48th Japan-India Joint Economic Commission meeting in New Delhi. Under the theme "Building a Japan-India Strategic Partnership for Industrial Growth and Regional Development," many prominent companies and organizations from Japan and India actively participated in substantive discussions.

Earlier, we paid a courtesy visit to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. During this meeting, we exchanged views on numerous topics, including the shared desire for steady progress toward achieving a public-private investment target of ¥5 trillion over the next five years, as well as on Speaker of the Lower House Fukushima Nukaga's proposal to promote exchanges involving more than 50,000 engineers and students in the information technology sector over that same period. Building on Modi's expressed expect-

tations, further business development between Japan and India is anticipated across countless fields. Collaboration with Japanese companies will be key in sectors such as semiconductors, electronics, chemicals and automobiles — especially electric vehicles.

Additionally, strengthening people-to-people connections through tourism promotion, expanding Japanese-language education in India, and increasing the acceptance of skilled Indian professionals and essential workers by Japan are also all important. These efforts will contribute to forging deeper interpersonal connections and business exchanges between our countries.

Once again, I wish to sincerely congratulate the esteemed people of India on the auspicious occasion of their Independence Day and express my heartfelt wishes for India's continued growth and prosperity.

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# India Independence Day Special

## Sustainability central to joint partnership

**RYUKO HIRA**  
CHAIRMAN, THE INDIAN COMMERCE  
AND INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION JAPAN



As India celebrates its 78th Independence Day anniversary, it stands as the world's largest democracy and one of the fastest-growing major economies. Fiscal 2024-25 gross domestic product growth is projected at around 6.5%, maintaining its strong position in the Group of 20 leading rich and developing nations after last year's remarkable 8.2%. This growth is driven by digital transformation, a \$200 billion information technology business process outsourcing industry and reforms enhancing competitiveness.

Japan remains a trusted partner, with ties rooted in mutual respect and shared values. Japan has pledged \$42 billion (\$5 trillion) over five years, supporting public and private projects. Key initiatives include the \$5.5 billion Patna Metro railway project and contributions to India's digital revolution through information and communications technology and talent

development, addressing urban challenges and advancing India's digital leadership. People-to-people connections thrive through programs like Sakura Science and the Indian Department of Science and Technology and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science fostering research collaboration and nurturing young innovators. Japanese language classes and scholarships enable Indians to contribute to Japan's economy, while Indian information and technology and artificial intelligence professionals bolster Japan's digital industries.

Sustainability is central to the partnership. The Green Ammonia Project, led by Acme and IHI, aims to cut 54 million tons of carbon dioxide, while the International Solar Alliance promotes clean energy and climate action, reflecting shared environmental responsibility.

The startup ecosystem also shows promise, with India's innovation — driven by over 100 unicorns — aligning with Japan's expertise in manufacturing, robotics and quality. Joint venture funds and incubators support entrepreneurs tackling global challenges.

The spiritual dimension of ties is increasingly valued. India brings yoga, meditation, ahimsa and *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (the world as one family) while Japan offers

zen, *wa* (harmony) and coexistence with nature. Together, these values add ethical depth, inspiring innovation, sustainability and harmony for a better future.

The Indian Commerce and Industry Association Japan, with a history spanning over 100 years, serves as an apex body to provide support, guidance and advisory services to all interested parties, enabling them to fully develop the economic potential and investment between Japan and India.

On behalf of all ICIJ members, I convey our deepest appreciation to readers of the Japan Times.



Prime Ministers Shigeru Ishiba and Narendra Modi EMBASSY OF INDIA

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**THE INDIAN SOCIAL SOCIETY**  
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to the People of India  
on the Anniversary of  
Their Independence

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