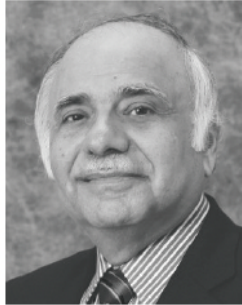


Golden age for economic growth

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Celebrating friendship, peace and ever-growing mutual dependence, India and Japan mark the 70th anniversary of their diplomatic relations in 2022, infusing new energy and renewed aware-

ness among their peoples.

Japanese celebrate longevity, or *koki*, when age 70 is reached. The color of the *koki* celebration is purple, which has long been a noble and virtuous color.

Among monarchies, the platinum jubilee is a celebration of the 70th anniversary, marking the beginning of the golden years of Japanese-Indian relations.

In my 56 years, I have personally witnessed the triumphs and accomplishments in the peaking of Japan and the rise of India as a superpower.

India is one of the fastest emerging and leading economies of the decade. According to a report by Oxford Economics based on annual gross domestic product growth, all 10 of the world's fastest growing cities across the globe will be in India.

The India Space Research Organization set a world record by launching 104 satellites into orbit in a single mission. The Mangalyaan, India's Mars orbiter, was made possible at the cheapest cost worldwide and has celebrated over 1,000 days in orbit so far. Japanese-Indian cooperation in sci-

ence and technology is an active catalyst for joint research. Most recently, the Department of Physics at the Sri Sathya Sai Institute of Higher Learning's Prashanthi Nilayam teamed up with Noriyoshi Matsumi, a team leader at the Japan Advanced Institute of Science and Technology, to develop anode fabrication for extremely fast-charging lithium-ion batteries suitable for use in electric vehicles. Much shorter charging times will attract consumers to EVs rather than gasoline-based vehicles, ultimately leading to cleaner environments in major cities across the world.

India is also accelerating efforts toward the "blue economy." The deep ocean mission is to explore the mineral wealth in the sea and thermal energy in seawater, which may lead to huge developments in the Indian economy. The Indian Scientists Association in Japan, jointly with Tokai University's School of Marine Science and Technology, recently organized a symposium on ocean science and technology heralding a new paradigm for India's blue economy.

India has given the world the math behind zero, trigonometry, calculus and many more groundbreaking inventions and discoveries.

India is home to the world's largest under-25 population, putting young people at the helm of decision-making and vibrant participation in sports, wherein India's best-ever seven medals were achieved last year at the Tokyo Olympics.

Using cutting-edge innovation and new technology, India excels in the manufacture and export of world-class products. The electronics manufacturing sector is symbolic of exporting mobile phones worth

billions of dollars. India has launched its first domestically built aircraft carrier, the INS Vikrant, and manufactures its own fighter aircraft and submarines, showing the excellence and immense capability of its domestic manufacturing.

Former Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga stated that he hoped to further develop cooperation in areas such as cyber, digital, decarbonization, health care and connectivity, and also mentioned possible collaboration in such fields as 5G, submarine cables, industrial competitiveness, supply chain diversification, development of India's North Eastern Region and the Specified Skilled Worker system.

Massive government-led reforms and structural changes have been implemented to build the platform for the making of a New India and the world's third-largest economy. A recent study predicts that digital transformation will add \$154 billion to India's GDP, increasing the growth rate by 1% annually. The COVID-19 pandemic has opened even greater potential for Japan-India cooperation.

To mark the 70th anniversary, a series of events are being organized by the Indian Commerce and Industry Association Japan and the India Foundation across Japan for students and society at large.

The ICIJ, celebrating its 100-year anniversary, 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 the readers of The Japan Times.