

## **REMARKS BY AMB SIBI GEORGE ON THE OCCASION OF RAKSHABANDAN AT THE EMBASSY, AUGUST 29, 2024**

Good Evening everybody,

A very warm welcome to Embassy of India.

Today Indians all across the world are celebrating the festival of Raksha Bandhan. I extend my greetings to all Indians in Japan on the occasion of Rakshabandan.

Dear Friends,

Raksha Bandhan is a festival that has been an integral part of our civilization for thousands of years. This is one of those unique festivals which has tremendous meaning and value. It was relevant when it started thousands of years ago and it continues to be most relevant in today's world. This is a festival that personifies the strength of the bond of affection between a brother and a sister.

Rakshabandan is essentially a celebration of bondings. It is a symbolic binding, a sacred vow to defend, protect each other with sister praying for the long life of her brother and brother silently renewing the pledge to protect her life and honor at all cost. It is a mutual sacrament. With the passage of time this festival has become gender neutral. Once a family festival, today it has become a social event. In the present day, it has come to symbolize all seeking and giving protection regardless of relationship. Nobody is isolated, nobody needs to feel lonely and be left to himself/herself as we are all part of the universal family, Vasudhaiva Kudumbakam. I would like to particularly mention that India had adopted Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, One Earth, One World, One Family as the theme of our G 20 Presidency, which we held last year.

I am happy to see that so many of our young children have come forward to celebrate this occasion today with us. I congratulate the

children who are joining us here today. I thank our associations who have come forward to join us to celebrate this important festival of Rakshabandan.

Dear Friends,

When we celebrate each of these festivals of India we are also spreading the message of India's civilizational history and traditional values in the country and society we live in. We need to put in more efforts in that front and I am sure that we can do it. I am convinced that we need to do more work in spreading our message and our civilizational values abroad. I invite you all to join hands with our embassy to celebrate India in Japan, together let's celebrate every festival of India here.

I am so happy to see so many of our Japanese friends here today to join us in this unique festival of love and partnership. I see it also an occasion for our two countries to renew our partnership by taking a sacred vow to defend and protect each other.

Once again I wish each one of you a very happy Rakshabandan.

Thank you.

\* \* \* \* \*