

Embassy of India

Tokyo

**Ambassador Sibi George's Keynote Address at 13th Annual ISAJ
Symposium**

**Theme: Frontiers of Materials, Life & Earth Sciences and Beyond
on**

Nov 18, 2022

at the Main Auditorium, Embassy of India, Tokyo, Japan

Dr. Sunil Kaul, Chairman, Indian Scientists Associations in Japan
(ISAJ) and other distinguished members of ISAJ,

Distinguished speakers, students,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Namaskar and Konnichiwa

I extend my warm welcome to all the speakers and participants in the 13th Annual ISAJ Symposium, which is being organized as a part of our year long celebrations to commemorate 70th anniversary of establishment of India-Japan Diplomatic Relations. It is heartening to note the interest and enthusiasm with which participation has been received and I am hopeful that this event will further promote cooperation in Science and Technology between India and Japan.

2. Dear Friends, cooperation in S&T has been one of the oldest and most active pillars of our India Japan Special Strategic and Global Partnership. Though our bilateral S&T cooperation was formalized in 1985, our joint efforts have been going on since times immemorial. Bilateral S&T cooperation was further promoted in 1993 with the establishment of the India-Japan Science Council (IJSC).

3. India Japan bilateral relationship has been dominated by cooperation in traditional fields such as defence and security, science and technology, space and cultural contact. 21st century problems, however, require 21st century solutions. Both countries understand this very well, which is why they are rapidly expanding their cooperation to non-traditional areas, such as, digital, cybersecurity, green energy and sustainable development a trend that is reflected in today's theme. Over the past years, we have developed wide ranging cooperation with Japan to promote science and technology in the frontier areas of sciences such Life Sciences, Material Sciences, High Energy physics, Biotechnology, Healthcare, Methane Hydrate, Robotics, Alternative Sources of Energy and Earth Sciences. ISRO and JAXA are also pursuing future cooperative activities in the use and exploration of outer space exclusively for peaceful purposes, disaster mitigation and lunar mission.

4. Some recent initiatives include establishment of three India-Japan Joint Laboratories in the area of ICT (AI, IoT and Big Data) and initiation of Department of Science and Technology (DST)-Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS) Fellowship Programme for the young researchers. Cooperation in the field of education is being implemented through partnership between education and research institutions, student and teacher exchange etc.

5. One of the key areas of collaboration between India and Japan is cooperation in Digital Technologies. In the recent Summit Meeting between Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi and Prime Minister His Excellency Kishida, the two sides recognized that digital technologies would play an increasingly important role in the post-COVID world and welcomed the growing cooperation under the Japan-India Digital Partnership with a view to enhancing digital economy through promotion of joint projects for digital transformation, support to provide opportunities for Indian IT professionals to work in Japan and Japanese companies, and collaboration made in the area of IoT, AI and other emerging

technologies. We are working together to further deepen cyber engagement with each other in multilateral fora, including in the United Nations.

6. India is home to 3rd largest start-up eco-system in the world with more than 70,000+ start-ups. Through various (Embassy facilitated) Startup India initiatives, since September 2019, Japanese VCs and corporations have invested in 100+ Indian Start-ups infusing more than US\$15 billion capital – as third largest source of foreign capital for Indian startups.

7. Institutional engagements are another bedrock of our engagements. Through joint projects, exchange visits of scientists, many joint seminars/workshops, seminars and lectures. However, the outcomes of all these activities and linking these activities to applications, including industrial applications, need to be made more visible. Efforts by ISAJ are part of these institutional engagements that help us deepen our engagement and realize the true value of our partnership.

8. Japan is our valuable partner in climate change and energy related initiatives. India is working to ensure that 40% of electric power in India is from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030. Japan has also announced its target of zero greenhouse gas emissions and carbon neutral society by 2050. Both countries need to combine innovation and technology and work closely to achieve these targets and develop R&D and production partnership in new and renewable sources of energy. In addition, there is immense potential for cooperation in civil nuclear cooperation. India and Japan Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement is in force since 2017.

9. The importance of healthcare sector has never been more pronounced than now. I am happy to state that India and Japan plan to collaborate on multiple aspects of healthcare, including human resource development in the fields of acute medicine, surgery, trauma care, under the MOC in the field of Healthcare and Wellness

signed in 2018. The MoU discusses cooperation between Japan's AHWIN program and India's Ayushman Bharat program.

10. India, as the world's largest producer of vaccines, with 60% global market share, emerged as a trusted partner for international and multilateral collaborations with regard to fight against COVID-19. During the Pandemic, India has been at the forefront in supplying medicines, medical kits, and vaccines. India has already supplied a total of the over 271 million doses to the global community under our Vaccine Maitri initiative.

11. Food security is another area that has come under spotlight after the outbreak of pandemic. India's food processing sector is expected to be worth over half a trillion dollars by 2025. The recent Agriculture sector reforms have opened India for investment opportunities in agricultural inputs and machinery, agriculture supply chain management, ready-to-eat items, fisheries and organic produce, smart agriculture and cold chain logistics.

12. Indian talent due to its technical, managerial and financial skills have reached to the top position of many world class Fortune 100 companies. There are more than 12500 Indians in Japan who are having Highly Skilled visa holders among a total of over 40,000 Indians living in Japan. The Basic Framework for Partnership for Proper Operation of the System Pertaining to "Specified Skilled Worker (SSW)" signed recently, will enhance cooperation in skill development.

13. I hope that this session will allow people to showcase the potential of using science and technology to create a sustainable and inclusive society and allow us to co-innovate and co-produce together.

Wishing all the presenters good luck.

Dhanyawad

Arigatou Gozaimashita
