

India Independence Day

Japan a major influence in Indian development

Ryuko Hira
PRESIDENT, THE INDIAN COMMERCE
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The mid-19th century was a period of unprecedented expansion of European power in Asia. In 1854, Japan was forced to end its long isolation and just three years later the entire Indian subcontinent became a colony of the British crown.

The older civilizations of Asia were confronted with a formidable challenge to their cultural and political integrity and they responded to this challenge in different ways. The Indian response took the character of religious revivalism and eventually turned in the direction of non-violent resistance to British rule. In contrast, the Japanese response was to build a powerful modern state capable of meeting the West on its own terms. India and Japan responded differently because of the differences in their political, cultural and social circumstances. India had lost its political autonomy so that the

regaining of independence became the first task of its leaders. Japan had no problem of recovering its political independence; it had never lost it. Nor had the Japanese social order crumbled as that of India though it had developed certain manifest weakness. Japan's problem was one of building enough national strength to withstand external pressures.

The Japanese response was the most spirited one. Instead of dismissing the West with disdain, Japan embarked upon a careful probe into the secrets behind Western power and strength. What then followed was a very judicious borrowing of Western knowledge and techniques and their application to selected areas of national life. Japan had been historically well conditioned to this experiment, for in the past it had absorbed influence from India and China and made them a part of its national ethos. The difference was that the Japanese renaissance of the 19th century, built on Western knowledge, brought Japan a reputation and prestige that it had not been able to attain either with Indian Buddhism or Chinese Confucianism.

The variety and range of

subjects discussed during the civilization and enlightenment movement covered every conceivable aspect of national life such as freedom, equality, independence, self respect, reason, science, utility, material well being, national language, the proper application of Western ideas to Japanese conditions, the institutional requirements of the new government and so on. The work of spreading new knowledge was taken up by the "Meiji Six Society" (so called because it was founded in 1873, the sixth year of the Meiji Era), an exclusive group that included the leading lights of the time.

To the question whether the techniques and methods of the West could be adopted without damaging the indigenous civilization, Japan had a pragmatic and, in many ways, unique answer. Even before the civilization and enlightenment movement had been inaugurated, the course had been charted out in Sakuma Shozan's cryptic formula of "Eastern ethics and Western techniques."

The leaders of Meiji Era Japan attached great importance to internal unity from a concern for national independence. A centralized state structure was

created in order to gain effective control over the human, as well national, resources of the nation. The most important measure taken by the government in the matter of removing social distance and creating a sense of equality was the introduction of universal education. The educational model was designed to supply trained people with superior industry, new processes, products, science, trade and commerce. It fostered qualities such as austerity, frugality, drive, initiative, ingenuity and a capacity to exploit opportunities, prudence and diligence. Above all, it was to provide "creative" and "innovative" entrepreneurial leadership, so essential for economic transformation.

Government investment activities were pursued with the three goals of setting the pace for industrial growth and expansion; diffusing know-how through model establishments; and demonstrating that Western industrial processes and methods could be successfully transplanted to Japan.

The total effect of all these attempts was that by the turn of the century Japan was a modern nation; a great power vying with its European peers and an industrial country

whose manufactured goods began to reach all the markets of the world. The renaissance of Japan had become an example for others to follow. The Japanese renaissance had a great impact on Asia, especially in countries where political independence had been lost and the intelligentsia was most impressed by the Japanese record. After the Russo-Japanese war the Japanese model became legendary, and many countries considered the model worthy of emulation.

The changes that were going on in Japan were only vaguely known in India until the end of 19th century. It was only when Indians came into direct contact with Japan that the full significance of those changes was realized. Indian nationalism was stimulated by Japanese example. Leaders of the incipient nationalist movement became convinced that India could move along the path that Japan had traversed if its people developed a strong sense of patriotism.

Different nationalist leaders found different points of the Japanese example to commend to the people of India. P.C. Majumdar, Swami Vivekananda, Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dadabhai Naoroji, B.G.

Tilak, G.K. Gokhale and Sister Nivedita urged people of India "to follow the Japanese sense of patriotism," their discipline and obedience.

Even today, the greatest impact of the Japanese example on Indian thinking in fields of industrial development and education continues to influence the policies of the National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), an institution set up by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

"Team Modi" has focused on economic priorities to transform India into a dependable global manufacturing powerhouse with emphasis on quality control as a national priority.

The Modi administration has approved stalled projects and provided more flexibility to ensure that bottlenecks are removed to get the engines of growth roaring. The turnaround of the economy, experienced by the masses since Modi took over, has been phenomenal.

For the first time in 30 years, the Bharatiya Janata Party came to power in May 2014 and since then Modi has delivered unprecedented dividends to the masses of India with a promise of making India a fully developed nation.

Shared values across a wide range of areas

Hirokyu Hosoda
PRESIDENT, JAPAN-INDIA PARLIAMENTARIANS'
FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League, we would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to the government and people of the Republic of India on the occasion of India's 70th Independence Day.

India, the world's largest democracy, is one of the most important partners for Japan. Our countries share universal values such as democracy, human rights and the rule of law, while maintaining a friendly relationship founded on a long history of exchanges.



The productive visit by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to India in December has ushered in the beginning of a new era in Japan-India relations. In this regard, it gives me great pleasure to note that the relationship between

Japan and India has been consolidated and transformed into a deep, broad-based and action-oriented partnership under the Japan and India Vision 2025 special strategic and global partnership.

While marking India's 70th Independence

Day, His Excellency Prime Minister Narendra Modi is expected to visit Japan this year and we sincerely hope that the exchange between the two countries will be expanded further in wide-ranging fields and levels, based on the close relations at the top level.

The Japan-India Parliamentarians' Friendship League remains strongly committed to contributing actively to the further deepening of the key relationship with the largest potential for growth.

On this auspicious day, I would like to send my best wishes to the people of India for their further prosperity and for the continued development of our cordial relationship.

Business forums forge economic ties

Hiroaki Nakanishi and Kazuo Hirai
CHAIRS OF KEIDANREN COMMITTEE
ON SOUTH ASIA

On behalf of Keidanren, we would like to offer our sincere congratulations to the people of India on the occasion of its 70th Independence Day.

India and Japan have forged the India-Japan special strategic and global partnership through diplomacy between their state leaders and business leaders forums among their business communities. On the economic front, India and Japan have steadily developed closer economic relations. Bilateral trade has doubled in the 10 years from 2005 to 2015 and the balance of Japan's investment in India has increased eight-fold over the same period. More than 1,200 Japanese companies conduct businesses in India today, and it is expected that bilateral business exchanges will continue to expand, leveraging the India-Japan comprehensive economic partnership agreement that took effect in August 2011.

Last December, the two countries' business communities held the eighth India-



Japan Business Leaders Forum in Delhi to coincide with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to India. At the forum, exchanges of views took place regarding various issues, including improving the business environment and infrastructure development for further deepening bilateral economic relations. The joint report from the forum was submitted to Indian Prime Minister H.E. Narendra Modi and Abe.

This year, the business communities will hold the ninth India-Japan Business Leaders Forum, this time to coincide with the visit to Japan by Modi.

Keidanren remains committed to holding these activities to further strengthen India-Japan economic relations and we kindly ask for your continued support and cooperation in this endeavor.



Prime Minister Narendra Modi (right) and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in New Delhi in December. MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Jai Hind!
Banzai India

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15th August
Happy Independence Day!

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HAPPY 70th INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA

"MAA TUJEH SALAAM"
"VANDE MATARAM"
AYE MERE WATAN KE LOGON
AAP SUBKO AZAADI KA DIN MUBARAK HO.

Things do not grow better; They remain as they are. It is WE who grow better; by the changes WE make in ourselves.

-Swami Vivekananda
Let's March Together
Jai Hind

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INDIA
15th August
INDEPENDENCE
DAY