

Japan Calling

☐ A quarterly newsletter from the Embassy of Japan, India 🇮🇳



Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan viewing the 'bo' tree They planted 53 years ago, with Ambassador of Japan and Mrs. Yagi, on the Embassy premises in New Delhi (1 Dec 2013)

(Photo credit: Embassy of Japan in India)

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VISIT TO INDIA BY THEIR MAJESTIES THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN



His Majesty Emperor Akihito



Her Majesty Empress Michiko

(Photos courtesy: Imperial Household Agency of Japan)

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan made a state visit, together with Her Majesty the Empress, to India, from November 30 to December 6, 2013, in order to deepen friendly relations with the country, with whom it celebrated, in 2012, the sixtieth anniversary of Japan-India diplomatic relations. This was Their Majesties' first visit to India in 53 years, the previous time being a reciprocal visit undertaken in 1960 following the visit to Japan by His Excellency Rajendra Prasad, the then President of India. At the time, there were no legal provisions to allow others to temporarily substitute for His Majesty the Emperor in His affairs of state, so the then Crown Prince undertook the reciprocal visit in place of Emperor Showa.

Their Majesties' visit this time started in Delhi, where Their Majesties attended the welcoming ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, the presidential palace, met with His Excellency President Pranab Mukherjee and his daughter, Ms. Sharmistha Mukherjee, and attended a banquet hosted by His Excellency President Mukherjee. Their Majesties also received in audience the Honorable Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the Vice President and Speaker of Rajya Sabha, His Excellency Mr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari, and the Leader of the Opposition, Lok Sabha, Mrs. Sushma Swaraj. Their Majesties accepted the invitation of the Honorable Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Ms. Gursharan Kaur for a luncheon at their official residence. Their Majesties also took a walk in the Lodhi Gardens, where They met with and talked with many local people as well as Japanese nationals living in Delhi. At Jawaharlal Nehru University, after listening to the outline of the university, Their Majesties observed a class in the Japanese Language Department, visited the library to see some of its collection, and conversed with

some students. At the India International Centre, Their Majesties met with those who have been working hard to promote friendly relations between India and Japan and expressed Their gratitude and appreciation for their efforts. At the New Delhi Japanese school, Their Majesties were welcomed by a performance of Japanese drums and dance by the pupils. Their Majesties talked with those pupils and heard about the activities of the school from the principal and the teachers. At the Japanese Ambassador's residence, Their Majesties saw that the bo tree, *Ficus religiosa*, which They had planted 53 years ago as a sapling, had now grown into a very big tree, and together with the embassy members and the local staff, They admired the tree, relishing the memories of Their previous visit. Also at the Ambassador's residence, Their Majesties attended a reception hosted by the Ambassador and his wife and met with representatives of the Japanese community.

In Chennai, the capital of the state of Tamil Nadu, which Their Majesties visited for the first time, They met with the Governor, His Excellency Dr. Konijeti Rosaiah, and the Chief Minister of the state, Ms. Jayaram Jayalalithaa, and attended a luncheon hosted by the Governor. They visited the Kalakshetra Cultural Academy, where They enjoyed the traditional music and dance of Southern India. At the Tamil Nadu Udayikkaram Association for the Welfare of the Differently Aabled, Their Majesties observed the rehabilitation exercise and vocational training of children with disabilities and gave encouragement to the children and staff. Their Majesties also took a walk in the Children's Park in Guindy National Park, where They were welcomed by many local people and conversed with them. At the hotel where They were staying, Their Majesties attended a tea for Japanese nationals and gave encouragement to those working in India. When leaving Delhi and Chennai, Their Majesties had tea with those who had worked as members of the welcoming staff in those cities to show Their appreciation and also thanked the security staff for their services.

(Source: Imperial Household Agency of Japan)

Sharing His thoughts about the India visit, in a Press Conference on His birthday, December 23, 2013, His Majesty Emperor Akihito said, "On visiting India this time, because of my previous visit, I did have a certain amount of knowledge about the country, but I also felt that there was much greater interest in Japan and deeper interaction between the two countries now than the last time I was there. For example, we observed the students at the Jawaharlal Nehru University having discussions in Japanese, and their discussions, all in Japanese, were very impressive. I was also struck by the Indian boy we met in a park who was thinking seriously about local environmental issues. From the many things we saw and heard, I received the impression that we can expect high hopes for future exchanges with India and for the development of the country itself."

(Source: Imperial Household Agency of Japan)

PHOTO ALBUM OF THEIR MAJESTIES' PROGRAMME IN INDIA



The Emperor and Empress being received by Prime Minister Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mrs. Gursharan Kaur upon Their arrival in New Delhi

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



Emperor Akihito inspecting the Guard of Honour at the Ceremonial Reception at Rashtrapati Bhavan

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



President Pranab Mukherjee with Their Majesties at Rashtrapati Bhavan

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



His Majesty Emperor Akihito making an address at the Welcome Banquet hosted by President Pranab Mukherjee

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



Their Majesties laying a wreath at the Samadhi of Mahatma Gandhi at Rajghat

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



Emperor Akihito meeting with Vice President M. Hamid Ansari

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



The Emperor meeting with Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



Their Majesties received a bouquet by Indian children at Lodhi Garden, New Delhi

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India - P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



His Majesty Akihito and Her Majesty Michiko view a Japanese language class during Their visit at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India - P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



Her Majesty Empress Michiko interacting with students of Jawaharlal Nehru University, in New Delhi

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India - P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



The Emperor and Empress visiting the India International Centre, New Delhi

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India - P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko watch the students' performance during Their visit at the Japanese School, New Delhi

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India - P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)

PHOTO ALBUM OF THEIR MAJESTIES' PROGRAMME IN INDIA (contd.)



Their Majesties at the Japanese Embassy, New Delhi. In the background is the 'bo' tree which They planted 53 years before, in 1960

(Photo credit: Embassy of Japan in India)



Governor of Tamil Nadu, Dr. K. Rosaiah, releasing a commemorative postage stamp to mark the visit of Emperor and Empress of Japan to India, in Chennai. Chief Minister Dr. J. Jayalithaa is also seen in the picture

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India – P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



The Emperor and Empress at the Demonstration of Veena at the Kalakshetra Foundation in Chennai

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India)



His Majesty Akihito and Her Majesty Michiko walking round the Children's Park at Guindy National Park in Chennai

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India – P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



Emperor and Empress of Japan visiting the Spastic Society of Tamil Nadu in Chennai

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India – P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)



Their Majesties depart India after Their historic visit

(Photo courtesy: Ministry of External Affairs of India – P D Photo by N. Varadharajan)

ADDRESS BY HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR AT THE WELCOME BANQUET AT RASHTRAPATI BHAWAN

December 2, 2013

It is a great pleasure for the Empress and myself to visit your country at the invitation of Your Excellency President Pranab Mukherjee on the occasion of the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and India. I would like to express my profound gratitude to Your Excellency for hosting this banquet for us this evening, and for your most gracious words of welcome.

I visited your country for the first time 53 years ago as a representative of Emperor Showa, with the then Crown Princess, to reciprocate the visit to Japan by His Excellency President Rajendra Prasad. We were received with the most gracious hospitality by Their Excellencies President Prasad, Vice President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, and Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. I fondly recall the warm welcome we received from the people everywhere we went on our journey around the country, including the Delhi citizens' welcome event at Red Fort organized by Prime Minister Nehru. As a student, the Empress had encountered *Glimpses of World History*, a book written by Prime Minister Nehru in the form of letters addressed to his daughter Indira, and I am sure that the Empress still cherishes the memories of the various occasions in the course of our visit when Prime Minister Nehru joined us.

Given the geographical distance between our two countries, it is thought that there was little interaction between Japan and India in ancient times. But by the sixth century, Buddhism, which had originated in India, was introduced to Japan via Paekche on the Korean Peninsula. By the eighth century, the city of Nara, the capital of Japan at the time, was home to many Buddhist temples, and the religion came to be widely practiced in Japan. In the eighth century, it is known that an Indian monk by the name of Bodhisena, who had traveled to Japan all the way from India, presided as the officiating priest at the eye-opening ceremony of the statue of the Great Buddha in Nara, in the presence of Empress Koken, Ex-Emperor Shomu, and Empress Dowager Komyo. The brush which was used in the ceremony to paint in the eyes of the Great Buddha is preserved to this day as a treasure at the Shosoin Repository.

Other than a few ancient examples such as this, exchanges between the peoples of our two countries did not

take place until after the mid-19th century, when Japan decided to end its more than 200 years of national seclusion and enter into diplomatic relations with other countries. The Indian poet Rabindranath Tagore, who visited Japan before World War II, was welcomed with deep respect by the Japanese people. On our previous tour of India, we visited the Tagore House in Kolkata. There I remember listening to the Indian national anthem, whose words and music were written by Tagore, being beautifully sung to the accompaniment of Indian musical instruments.

Our previous journey to India spanned quite a wide area, beginning in Kolkata and covering Mumbai, Delhi, Agra, Bodh Gaya and Patna, among other places. The Empress and I were both very young at the time, only in our mid-twenties, and we fell far short of fully understanding the depth of your great country. But through our exchanges with then President Prasad and other leaders who had led the country since its independence, we were able to learn about India's past and become aware of these leaders' high aspirations for nation-building, based on the ideals of democracy, internationalism, and pacifism directly affiliated with Mahatma Gandhi's principle of non-violent resistance. This experience has left a strong and lasting impression on us to this day.

Our tour this time includes the southern city of Chennai, which we could not visit last time. We are looking forward to this opportunity as an experience to further our understanding of India's diversity.

Finally, on behalf of the people of Japan, and particularly taking into consideration the feelings of those who have lost family members in the atomic bombings, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to the Parliament of India for paying tribute to Japan's atomic bomb victims in August every year.

It is my hope that our current visit will help to further deepen the mutual understanding between the peoples of our two countries and further strengthen our bond of trust and friendship. I would now like to raise my glass in a toast to many years of good health for Your Excellency President Mukherjee and Ms. Sharmistha and to the happiness of the people of India.

For more information, please visit the following websites:

Embassy of Japan in India:

The Imperial Household Agency of Japan:

http://www.in.emb-japan.go.jp/HMs_data.htm

<http://www.kunaicho.go.jp/eindex.html>

New Delhi (23 December 2013)



Mr. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman - Planning Commission, flanked by Ambassador Takeshi Yagi and Mrs. Yagi



A section of guests at the reception

EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATED IN INDIA

Receptions to celebrate the 80th birthday of His Majesty Emperor Akihito were held in New Delhi, Kolkata, Chennai, Mumbai and Bangalore during the month of December 2013:

Kolkata (13 December 2013)



Consul-General, Mr. Mitsuo Kawaguchi, and Mrs. Kawaguchi interacting with guests



Serving freshly prepared tempura

Chennai (12 December 2013)



Consul-General, Mr. Masanori Nakano, addressing guests



Guests present on the joyous occasion

Mumbai (12 December 2013)



Consul-General, Mr. Kiyoshi Asako, and Mrs. Asako (left) receiving guests



Guests being served at the reception

Bangalore (13 December 2013)



Consul & Head of Consulate, Mr. Nobuaki Yamamoto (right) with Home Minister of Karnataka, Mr. K.J. George (on his right), inspecting exhibits



Guests tasting Japanese food

JAPANESE HONOURS BESTOWED UPON EMINENT INDIANS

The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star to Dr. E. Sreedharan



Dr. Sreedharan after the Presentation Ceremony in the Imperial Palace, Tokyo, on 6th November 2013



Delhi Metro

The Government of Japan conferred “the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star” on Dr. E. Sreedharan, former Managing Director of the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation, on 3rd November 2013, in recognition of his contribution to strengthening Japan’s presence in India and to promoting friendly relations between Japan and India through the Delhi Metro Project. He received the Insignia and Certificate from Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in the Imperial Palace in Japan on

6th November and was granted an audience with His Majesty the Emperor.

Dr. Sreedharan played a leading role in carrying the Delhi Metro project forward with the support of the Official Development Assistance by the Government of Japan, and promoted the understanding among the people of India that this Japan-India collaboration has made a great contribution to the public welfare in Delhi and India.

Foreign Minister’s Commendation to Prof. Lalima Varma



H.E. Mr. Takeshi Yagi, Ambassador of Japan, presenting the Commendation certificate to Prof. Lalima Varma



Prof. Varma addressing the audience

Prof. Lalima Varma, Professor of Japanese Studies, Centre for East Asian Studies, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, was awarded by H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, with the Foreign Minister’s Commendation for the year 2013, in recognition of her distinguished service in promoting mutual understanding

between Japan and India through her academic endeavours.

A presentation ceremony was held on October 1, 2013 at the Embassy of Japan in New Delhi, where H.E. Mr. Takeshi Yagi, Ambassador of Japan, formally handed over the citation to Prof. Varma in the presence of distinguished invited guests. The ceremony was followed by a reception.

INSCRIPTION OF “WASHOKU, TRADITIONAL DIETARY CULTURES OF THE JAPANESE, NOTABLY FOR THE CELEBRATION OF NEW YEAR” ON UNESCO’S REPRESENTATIVE LIST OF THE INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF HUMANITY

On December 4, 2013, it was decided at the 8th Session of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, that “Washoku, traditional dietary cultures of the Japanese, notably for the celebration of New Year”, nominated by Japan, would be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

TRADITIONAL DIETARY CULTURES OF THE JAPANESE - WASHOKU

Many of Japanese cultures are based on an essential spirit, that is, “respect for nature”. This spirit also has great influence on our dietary culture, daily life, annual events, and any important moments in our life. We call social practices about diet on the basis of this spirit as “WASHOKU”. WASHOKU is a social practice that is based on a comprehensive set of skills, knowledge, practice and traditions based on this spirit of “respect for nature”.

incoming year. All members of each family get together from all over Japan, share these special meals, and pray for good health for the incoming year.

Osechi are special dishes to celebrate the incoming year, made from locally available fresh ingredients, and are beautifully and compactly packed into special nested boxes called Jyu-bako. Each item of the Osechi has an auspicious meaning. Elders teach these meanings to the younger generation thereby transmitting the tradition of New Year’s celebration.



Not only in special occasions such as annual events, Japanese people appreciate nature-gifted ingredients in daily diets. For example, a custom to say “Itadaki-masu” before eating with both hands together is an expression of appreciation for nature-gifted ingredients. This phrase means “I humbly receive the gifts”.



WASHOKU is closely connected to annual events. Especially, basic knowledge, social and cultural characteristics associated with WASHOKU are typically seen in New Year’s celebrations.

Basic knowledge and skills of WASHOKU are mainly handed down at home in daily life. For example, proper seasoning of home cooking are called “Ofukuro-no-aji (taste of mother’s cooking: home cooking)”. They were handed down from parents or grandparents to their descendants at home.



WASHOKU fosters family and social cohesion.

Food preparation for various events by community cooperation and mutualism such as rice pounding is an example to strengthen the feelings of solidarity and fellowship.



(Photos and text courtesy: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan)



It starts with preparation of rice cakes to offer the deities of the incoming year. People work together to pound rice cakes with community members. Then, the participants share the rice cakes and offer them to the deities in each home.



Besides rice pounding, people prepare special meals such as beautifully decorated dishes called Osechi, Zoni and Toso to celebrate the



EXPLORING JAPAN: NEW YEAR CELEBRATION IN JAPAN

In the second part of our series, we bring you some beautiful images depicting new year festivities and traditional customs observed at the beginning of the year in Japan.

To see more pictures or find information about travelling in Japan, visit the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) website <http://www.jnto.go.jp/>



Kadomatsu (Decorative pine branches at entrance)

©JNTO



New Year's visit to Senso-ji Temple

©Taito City/©JNTO



Shime-Kazari (Straw Rope Decorations)

©JNTO



Shishimai (Lion Dance)

©JNTO



Kakizome (First writing of New Year)

©JNTO



Maebashi Hatsuchi Festival

©Maebashi Convention & Visitors Bureau/©JNTO

EXPERIENCES IN JAPAN

By: Rithika Dulam,
MEXT Scholarship Recipient

I am Rithika Dulam and have been to Japan for doing my Master's degree with the help of MEXT scholarship. I had completed my Bachelors degree in the field of Civil Engineering and had wished to pursue a higher degree in the same field. Hence, I had chosen Earthquake engineering in the scholarship category and obtained admission in University of Tokyo, which is one of the best universities in the world. After finishing my course, I found that I couldn't have taken a better decision, which has helped me in developing my career in the research field.

Japan is a wonderful country with exquisite flora and ever helping people. I have observed that the customs, traditions or family values are quite similar with India.

Coming to the differences, Yes, I agree that the food part is difficult to adjust to in the initial stage, but believe me, once you inculcate the habit of eating Japanese food you will love it and also it is quite healthy. Therefore, it's not at all counted as a hurdle but a minor blocker. Another hindrance with higher intensity is language. One will have to work on it to make one's life easier in Japan. This you will be able to overcome easily given an advantage that you are a student. You will have a lot of Japanese friends, who help you learn the language quickly. You will also have the ever supporting and enthusiastic faculties, always ready to help foreign students.

I was studying at the Earthquake Research Institute of the University of Tokyo, situated in the school's yayoi campus, while I was registered as a student of the Civil Engineering Department. The professors



My Graduation

and students in the University are shining pearls with sheer excellence and I have had the experience of working together with some of the brightest minds in the country. You will be in regular discussion with your professor and lab mates, allowing you an opportunity of constant improvement. I have thoroughly enjoyed my duration of 2 years at the school even though it was stressful at times. At the end of which, I had a thesis, a publication and 2 conference to my name. There is an Indian student association in the university (UTISA), which makes you feel at home in your school.

I was living in the JASSO (Japan Student Service Organization) dormitory for international students, where you get a varied option to interact with numerous people from diversified countries every single day. You get favorable chances to learn about their cultures and traditions and leave you with some friendships which stay on for a lifetime. I used to travel around 1 hour to get to school everyday, which is quite common in Tokyo. There are number of Indian stores, which supply at your door step, with anything and everything you require.

For all the girls and mothers, who are too anxious about their or their kid's safety, Japan is one of the safest of safest places. It is quite secure to travel during late night, if you need to travel incase. There is not a single thing to be afraid of in Japan. You will enjoy your stay to the fullest and will miss being there the moment you move out of the country. Japan is a must visit place in one's lifetime, however given an opportunity to study there is a must grab option!!!



With friends in Japanese Language Class

For information on MEXT scholarships, please get in touch with: Mr. Surajit Sinha, Japan Information Centre, Embassy of Japan, New Delhi - Tel. (Direct): 011-4610-4865, PBX: 2412 2970~2, 4610-4810; Fax: 011-2410 6976; Email: jpemb.sinha@nd.mofa.go.jp

JOCV JAPAN WORKSHOP

By JICA India Office

JOCV (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers) introduce Japanese culture and art as part of their cooperation activities through activities such as Judo demonstrations, Japanese Art workshops on Japanese calligraphy, Japanese traditional games, use of chopsticks, tea-ceremony etc.



On September 7, 2013, as part of the 'Japan Education Fair' held in Bengaluru, JOCV conducted a Japanese culture workshop introducing *yukata* wearing, *origami* and *kendama/daruma otoshi* (Japanese traditional games). Many school students participated and enjoyed playing the Japanese games. Some students were seen taking pictures in *yukata* and some trying to walk like Japanese in *geta* (Japanese clogs). Surprisingly, many students already knew *origami*, so it was fun to teach them rare and difficult shapes. A

sense of achievement and wonder was visible on the faces of students when they could make complex figures with *origami*. Overall, it was a good opportunity for students to speak in Japanese with JOCV and know more about Japan.

The JOCV program is a part of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s technical cooperation program. JOCV are motivated and dedicated young people



who wish to cooperate in the economic and social development in India. As of November 2013, there are 6 JOCV in India, working in the field of Japanese language and Judo. The JOCV program is now expanding to other fields as well.

If you are interested in more information on JOCV, please contact JICA India Office (Tel: 011-4768-5500).

ORGANIZATIONS AFFILIATED WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)
2nd Floor, Dr. Gopal Das Bhawan
28, Barakhamba Road
New Delhi 110 001

Tel: 4768-5500, 2371-4362 ~ 63
Fax: 4768-5555
<http://www.jica.go.jp/india/english/>

Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC)
1st floor, The Metropolitan Hotel
New Delhi
Bangla Sahib Road
New Delhi 110 001

Tel: 4352-2900
Fax: 4352-2950
<http://www.jbic.go.jp/en/about/office/new-delhi/>

Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)
4th Floor, Eros Corporate Tower
Nehru Place
New Delhi 110 019

Tel: 4168-3006
Fax: 4168-3003
<http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/jetro/worldwide/asia/>

The Japan Foundation New Delhi
5A, Ring Road
Lajpat Nagar 4
Near Moolchand Metro Station
New Delhi 110 024

Tel: 2644-2967/68/71/72
Fax: 2644-2969
<http://www.jfindia.org.in/>

New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO)
7th Floor, Hotel Le Meridien
Commercial Tower, Raisina Road
New Delhi 110 001

Tel: 4351-0101
Fax: 4351-0102
http://www.nedo.go.jp/english/india_office_index.html

Key in "www.in.emb-japan.go.jp" to access the website of the Embassy of Japan, New Delhi.

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FOR SUBSCRIPTION OR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

For Maharashtra, Gujarat, Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli, Chhattisgarh and M.P.: The Consulate General of Japan in Mumbai.

For West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand and Orissa: The Consulate General of Japan in Kolkata.

For Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Kerala and Andhra Pradesh: The Consulate General of Japan in Chennai.

For Karnataka: The Consulate of Japan in Bangalore.

For remaining states and territories: Japan Information Centre, Embassy of Japan, New Delhi.

FOR CHANGES

In case of change of address, please communicate the old as well as new address.

FEEDBACK

Please send us your comments on and inquiries about the articles in this issue to: jpembjic@nd.mofa.go.jp