

Remarks by Ambassador Suzuki at the Workshop on Enabling
Procedures for Increase of Steel Usage for the Growth of Economy,
in Delhi (24 February, 2020)

Shri Dharmendra Pradhan, Honorable Minister of Steel and
Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas,

Shri Faggan Singh Kulaste, Honorable Minister of State for Steel,

Esteemed Senior Representatives of the Government of India,

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be with you this morning for today's workshop.

This workshop is going to be organized in three cities, Delhi, Mumbai and Bhubaneswar, with the kind cooperation of the Ministry of Steel. It aims at not only stimulating domestic steel demand but also strengthening competitiveness of Indian steel industry, by sharing Japan's experience and expertise.

At today's workshop, experts from Japan will share their knowledge on the constructional technology of steel structures such as buildings and bridges. They will also touch upon various advantages of using steel structures, including enhancing resistance against fire, harsh weather and seismic activity. I hope the knowledge and experience shared at this workshop will contribute to improving the quality of steel products and also to creating further demand for steel structures in India.

India and Japan have strengthened their cooperative relationship

in the area of steel through various opportunities. Japan and India have been following long-term contracts for iron ore exports for over 50 years. I must mention that the first shipment of iron ore from India to Japan was made in 1953 and it significantly helped Japan at that time to revitalize its economy after the devastation of WW II. Japanese people never forget India's kind support to us. The long-term contract has become a symbol of the strong and stable partnership between our two countries.

Now India has become the second largest steel producer in the world, having surpassed Japan. The demand for steel in India is on an expanding trend, mainly in the sphere of infrastructure development and the automotive sector.

Responding to the increasing demand, the Government of India has taken various steps to enhance domestic steel production capacity under the "Make in India" initiative. In the National Steel Policy 2017, the Government of India set a target to increase crude steel production capacity to 300 million tons by 2030.

Under such encouraging circumstances, Japanese steel makers are getting more motivated to actively collaborate with India. For example, JFE Steel has invested in JSW. Nippon Steel has established a joint venture with Tata Steel, and recently (on 16th December 2019) acquired Essar Steel in collaboration with Arcelor Mittal. Such a move is expected to contribute to the further development of the steel industry in both India and Japan.

Looking at the global steel market, we contributed to be faced with the issue of overcapacity of steel production. India and Japan are

working together to address this issue in multilateral fora, such as G20 and “the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity”. At the Global Forum held in Tokyo last October, Hon. Minister Pradhan kindly attended the Ministerial Meeting, and all participating countries shared the recognition of the critical significance of the steel industry for the global economy.

As major steel producers, it is vital for us to jointly work to stabilize the world steel market.

I am pleased to inform you that METI and the Ministry of Steel are working on launching an “India-Japan Steel Dialogue”, and we are expecting to hold a first round of the dialogue early this year. The dialogue will raise our mutual understanding on the current bilateral and multilateral situations and give us opportunities to discuss issues to secure sustainable growth in the steel sector.

I look forward to further making our partnership robust through these efforts.

In concluding, I hope that all the participants here will put into practice expertise and knowledge shared at this workshop to increase capacity to produce high quality steel products in India.

I wish all the participants all the best for future activities.

Thank you so much for your kind attention.