

Remarks by Ambassador Hiramatsu
at Product Launch Ceremony of KAI Manufacturing India
on 10th May 2017, at Hotel Shangri-La, Delhi

- Mr. Koji Endo, CEO and President, Kai Group,
- Mr. Rajesh Pandya, COO, KAI India,
- Mr. Boman Irani,
- Friends from the media,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is indeed my great pleasure to have this opportunity to celebrate the product launching ceremony of Kai Manufacturing India.

It will be a fair assessment to say that the India-Japan relationship of today is at the strongest than ever, and it is steadily developing even further. Prime Minister Abe once stated that our relationship is blessed with the largest potential for development of any bilateral relationship anywhere in the world. This is proved to be true. Right now we have more than 1,300 Japanese companies in India.

The number of Japanese business establishments in India is around 4,600, which is the total of business entities, such as liaison offices, branches, business offices and manufacturing plants. Japan's Foreign Direct Investments into India is already beyond 4.2 billion USD only in the first half of the last Fiscal Year, compared with 2.6 billion USD in previous Fiscal Year. The Official Development Assistance from Japan to India counted 3.4 billion USD in the last Fiscal Year. The amount broke the record two years in a row.

With this strong backdrop, I warmly welcome the products of Kai brand into the Indian market. Kai group's core competence is in manufacturing blades, like razors and kitchen knives. With a history of more than 100 years, their product is closely associated with craftsmanship in Japan.

I am very happy that Kai group has decided to come to invest in India, especially in Neemrana, in the State of Rajasthan. Neemrana is one of the most successful industrial zones in India, with an entire area dedicated for Japanese companies. More than 40 companies are operating there at the moment. Kai group's manufacturing plant in Neemrana is employing nearly 100 people, including a dozen of local women. This is a successful Japanese model of Make in India, and

Skill India.

Likewise, the government of Japan has committed to create 30,000 floor shop leaders in 10 years. I expect these efforts will further contribute to promote manufacturing industry in India.

Kai brand is widely known in Japan for razors, knives and beauty care products. In India, Japanese brands are already popular in auto sector like Suzuki and Honda, and in electronics sector like Daikin and Panasonic. In the recent years, the popularity of Japanese brands has expanded into the consumer goods sectors, with Nissin cup noodles, Unicharm sanitary products and Kokuyo Camlin stationery. I am confident that Kai brand will soon join the club.

As you see, the products that Kai group is launching into India, are of extremely high quality, with a sophisticated design and in many colorful options. I am sure that Kai brand, with their rich and more mature product range, will contribute to raise lifestyle standards of Indian people to the next level.

To conclude my remarks, let me congratulate once again the launching of the Kai brand products, and I wish for the very best for all of us present today.

Thank you very much.