

Address by Ambassador Satoshi Suzuki  
on the 3rd S. B. Verma Memorial Lecture at JNU  
(December 10, 2021)

Professor Prem Motwani, Former Professor of Centre for Japanese Studies (CJS), School of Language, Literature and Culture Studies (SLL&CS), Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU),

Professor Jagadesh Kumar, Vice-Chancellor of JNU,

Professor Mazhar Asif, Dean of SLL&CS

Professor P. A. George, Professor of CJS,

Distinguished participants, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Thank you for your kind introduction, Dr. Lakshmi. It is my pleasure to join the Third S. B. Verma Memorial Lecture with distinguished guests and respected professors of JNU.

I would like to thank JNU for organizing this special lecture particularly because I think reminiscing the achievements of Professor Verma through Professor Motwani's lecture will remind us of the importance of the partnership between our two countries.

Japan-India relationship is rooted in their shared perceptions of the evolving environment in the region and the world at large. Our partnership encompasses close cooperation and active interaction in dealing with

bilateral, regional, multilateral and global issues. And, in this unpredictable global situation, this partnership has grown stronger than ever, thanks to the incessant efforts made by both sides.

Next year, the year 2022, will be a special one for both countries as it marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-India diplomatic relations. We have decided to celebrate this auspicious year under the theme of “Building a future for our Centenary.” We will keep working together and helping each other towards a better future for all of us. I am told that JNU is planning to organize “Kizuna Matsuri” and other events as part of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. I am truly grateful for your efforts. We will fully cooperate with JNU for the success of these events.

Distinguished participants,

Mutual understanding is the foundation of our friendship. We need to promote people-to-people exchanges further to deepen our mutual understanding. To achieve this, it is crucial to be able to communicate with each other with sufficient knowledge, not only on language, but also on respective cultures and histories. The Centre for Japanese Studies at JNU has been the leader in this field. I sincerely hope that JNU will keep playing a key role for the furtherance of Japan-India cooperative relations.

Unfortunately, due to newly emerging Omicron variant, the entry of foreign students to Japan under the Japanese Government scholarship program, including Indian students, has been temporarily suspended. Since the outbreak of the pandemic, some of the students who are participating in today's lecture might have canceled their trip to Japan, or are anxiously waiting for a next chance to travel to Japan. I fully share the concerns that the students as well as the teachers and parents must have. I hope that we will overcome the challenge in the near future and that next year will become a year to realize your dream and to deepen Japan-India relations further.

Before concluding, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Professor Prem Motwani for hosting this special lecture today. The occasion we met last time was the conferral ceremony of the Decoration of the Order of the Rising Sun Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon bestowed upon you at my residence. Taking this opportunity, let me renew my commendation, Professor Motwani, to your immense contributions in promoting academic exchanges and deepening mutual understandings between Japan and India.

I wish all the success of this lecture and hope the Centre for Japanese Studies at JNU will further prosper in the coming years. Thank you very much.