

Special remarks by Ambassador SUZUKI Satoshi
India-Japan cooperation for Women Empowerment
Focus on Technical Intern Training Programme (TITP) and
Specified Skilled Worker (SSW)

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Ms. Takako Oshibuchi, CEO, NAVIS India,

Distinguished participants from India and Japan,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. Introduction

Namaskar and good morning.

It is my great pleasure to address you all. The Embassy of Japan is honored to work with IJFF to hold this seminar. I would like to thank the FICCI for organizing this event by bringing together experts from TITP/SSW agencies who are working for the cause of women empowerment in India.

2. Women Empowerment

Japan has been working hard to raise awareness on gender equality and promoting gender mainstreaming and women's rights for years. At a government level, Japan has established the Gender Equality Bureau in the Cabinet Office in 2001, which is responsible for incentive policy for gender equality and the empowerment of women based on the "Basic Plan for Gender Equality" that has been revised every five years.

Since 2014, the "Headquarters for Creating a Society in which All Women Shine" has been established under the Abe Administration. They have been actively working to empower women in Japan as well as abroad since then.

Japan has been also advancing women empowerment through Official Development Assistance projects in various fields in India. A shining example is the Delhi Metro, which introduced women-only coaches that had an impact on ease-to-commute or safe-to-commute for female workers. Other projects are also under planning, which aim at improvement of rural livelihood through sustainable agricultural practices or empowerment of women in mountainous areas.

In the seminar on women empowerment held last year in collaboration with IJFF, "lack of educational opportunities" and "lack of awareness of various systems and initiatives" were identified as the main challenges hindering women's advancement in India.

3. TITP/SSW

Let me briefly introduce programs that can potentially provide good opportunities for women, especially those in economically

less privileged positions.

Japan has a scheme called TITP (Technical Intern Training Program) which accepts human resources from foreign countries to acquire job skills. Also, we have recently created a new status of residence called SSW (Specified Skilled Worker). This status allows foreign workers to reside and work in Japan under the same conditions as Japanese people doing the same work. TITP trainees can apply for SSW after finishing three years' internship in Japan and can continue to stay in Japan once they clear qualification tests.

The Governments of India and Japan signed MOCs regarding TITP in October 2017 and SSW in January 2021 respectively. The respective MOCs established a frame of collaboration between the governments to promote the dispatch of human resources in an appropriate working environment. India is keen to send its abundant human resources to Japan as was stressed in the joint statement issued after the recent Summit meeting between our two leaders.

For both TITP and SSW, the sector in high demand in Japan is nursing care. Such sectors as hospitality, agriculture and manufacturing are also open for Indian women. If more women from India start working in Japan, either as TITP trainees or SSW workers, I am sure that they will not only be economically more empowered, but also will be able to obtain a higher skill-set during their stay in Japan. That eventually enhance their self-reliance. This is why I think today's seminar is quite relevant. I hope that more people, especially young women, will come to know about the TITP and SSW schemes so that they will be able to benefit from these schemes.

4. Closing

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations. I am pleased that we are celebrating it together with the 75th anniversary of India's independence.

At the recent Summit meeting, the two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to promote people-to-people exchanges including youth, sports players, tourists as well as TITP and SSW participants.

I hope that this seminar will be instrumental in enabling more frequent exchanges and creating much stronger ties between our two countries.

Thank you very much.

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