



Gateway

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President's Message



Dear Friends,
Happy New Year!

By the time this Newsletter reaches you, 2019 would have been born! I am sure that the Christmas and New Year celebrations would have been plentiful and bountiful !

The election results in the Hindi main land has just been out and though closely

contested, Congress Party has come out as a winner. This only proves that democracy is alive and kicking in India and Indians should take pride that our election processes and conduct of elections are free and fair.

The Reserve Bank of India has also gone through a turmoil and now Mr. Shaktikanta Das, IAS, a former Revenue Secretary, has taken over as Governor of RBI. This appointment of a bureaucrat (from the Tamil Nadu cadre) is not new as Mr. S. Venkitaramanan, an IAS Officer, was the Governor of RBI during a difficult period in India and came out with flying colours and I am sure that Shakti will follow suit !

The Indian economy seems to be improving as the steps taken by the Government have helped. Ease of doing business in India has also improved. However, India still remains a somewhat difficult business destination according to press and investors - improvement can only come by further reforms which, I believe are mostly at the State's level.

Tamil Nadu went through another cyclone "Gaja". We understand that extensive damage has happened in the hinterlands of Pudukkottai, Nagapattinam and Thiruvavur districts. Due to lack of rains in Chennai, many of us are unaware of the extensive damage Gaja has caused. I am happy that the Government and the private sector are working seriously into helping the affected people to return to normalcy.

I am sure 2019 will be a successful year and I take the opportunity of wishing every one of you the very best.

Regards,

N. Kumar

LONG LIVE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN



Consul General Mr. Kojiro Uchiyama's emotional address at the Birthday Party on November 29, 2018 in Chennai



Crown Princess Masako vows to serve the people after she becomes Empress next year

Crown Princess Masako, the Harvard and Oxford-educated, vowed to make her best effort to serve the people as she is set to become Empress following May's Imperial succession. The Crown Princess gave up a career as a diplomat to become part of the Imperial family in 1993 after accepting a marriage proposal from the Crown Prince Naruhito.

In the statement released by the Imperial Household Agency, the Crown Princess said she is “filled with deep emotions and feels nostalgic” about her birthday this

year being the last one in the current Heisei era. The era will end after Emperor Akihito, 84, abdicates on April 30, the day before the enthronement of his eldest son, Crown Prince Naruhito, 58. The Emperor expressed his desire in August 2016 to step down due to his age and health.

The Crown Princess expressed her gratitude for the Emperor and Empress Michiko, noting that the Imperial Couple “warmly welcomed me and generously continued guiding and watching over us” since her marriage to the Crown Prince was decided about 26 years ago.

Referring to the Imperial Couple's new life after the succession, the Crown Princess said, “I wish from the bottom of my heart (the Imperial Couple) will unwind from their busy life and spend peaceful days.” “I want to devote myself to the happiness of the people so I will make an effort to that end while gaining more experience,” said the Princess.

Looking back over the past year, the Crown Princess said it felt “painful” that many people lost their lives in natural disasters such as torrential rains in western Japan in July and September's powerful earthquake in Hokkaido. Touching on her visit in September to the city of Asakura, in Fukuoka Prefecture, which was hit hard by the deadly rains, she said: “I am sincerely hoping for steady reconstruction so that people affected by the disaster can live with security as soon as possible.”



Language skills remain major concern for foreign nursing care workers coming to Japan

While a new visa system approved by the Diet, set to take effect in April 2019, has been welcomed by Japan's labor-short nursing care businesses, questions remain about how to provide sufficient Japanese-language education for foreign workers. Despite the government's steps taken in recent years to relax rules on foreign workers in the sector, language skills have been a major barrier.

Foreign students who became certified caregivers were not eligible to remain in Japan for work until a legal amendment in September last year. Still, the relaxed rule did little to address the labor shortage for nursing facilities. As of June this year, only 177 foreigners were working in the country's nursing care industry after earning caregiver certification.

There are currently two other ways for foreigners to work as caregivers in Japan. The first is to participate in a work program provided under economic partnership agreements (EPA) and gain a certificate while working at a nursing home. The other is using Japan's technical intern program.

However, a high Japanese-language competency requirement has been preventing either of the programs from significantly increasing the number of certified caregivers. Those who passed a national exam to become a certified caregiver during their stay under the EPA program totalled 719 since between fiscal 2008 and 2017. After nursing care was added to the list of occupations for the technical intern program in November last year, only 247 trainees came to Japan.

By providing the new status from April, the government has said that it expects to accept 5,000 foreign workers in the nursing sector the first year and up to 60,000 over five years. Between the two new resident statuses created under the new visa system, the first type, valid for up to five years, is for people to engage in work that requires a certain level of knowledge including nursing care, and the second type for work that needs higher-level skills.

Applicants for the new working status will be required to pass Japanese-language and technical exams. Those who wish to work as caregivers will need skills equivalent to those of people who have received three years of training. Nursing Home officials are worried about the inadequacy of the nursing care professionals in Japan currently.

Exhibition of Japanese Dolls & Traditional Children Toys of Japan

Ms. Hiroko Taniguchi, Deputy Consul-General of the Consulate General of Japan in Chennai inaugurated a two-day Exhibition on Hina Dolls and Traditional Children Toys of Japan at IJCCI premises on 17th November.



International Film Festival

Palm d'Or award winning Japanese movie 'Manbiki Kazoku' (Shoplifters) was screened on 13th and 14th December 2018 in Chennai as part of the 16th International Film Festival organised by the Indo Cine Appreciation Foundation. Consul-General of Japan, Chennai Hon'ble Mr. Kojiro Uchiyama appreciated Indo Cine Appreciation Foundation, Japan Foundation and Indo-Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry for their efforts in showcasing this movie.



G-20 in Osaka in June 2019

"The G20 is responsible for finding solutions to global issues. With the cooperation of the G20 leaders, we would like to lead the Osaka G20 to success," said Prime Minister Abe, expressing his enthusiasm for next year's summit prior to the conclusion of the G20 meeting in Buenos Aires.

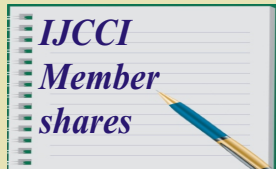
The Osaka meeting is Japan's first opportunity to Chair a G20 Summit, will be held on June 28-29 at Intex Osaka, a large exhibition hall in Suminoe Ward in the city's bay area. About 5,000 diplomatic personnel are expected to visit Osaka for the event. Those expected to attend are U.S. President Donald Trump, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Russian President Vladimir Putin and South Korean President Moon Jae In. Prime Minister Shinso Abe is scheduled to meet individually with the leaders.

Japan will host eight ministerial meetings, including the finance ministers and central bank governors' meeting in Fukuoka on June 8-9 ahead of the leadership summit and the foreign ministers' meeting in Nagoya on Nov. 22-23. A meeting of sherpas, or personal representatives of nations' leaders, is set to convene in Japan in late January to prepare for the leadership summit. The focus of next year's conference will likely be whether leaders can reach a common understanding on maintaining the free-trade system, a continuation of the agenda from the most recent meeting.

Kannur, Kerala International Airport



Kannur International Airport Limited (KIAL), the second green field airport in Kerala, being built on Public-Private Partnership model in an area of about 2,000 acres is operational from 9th December 2018, the fourth international airport in Kerala, the other three are at Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi and Kozhikode. The airport is expected to have an approximate annual traffic of 1.65 million international and 0.16 million domestic passengers in FY 2018-19. Also, The KIAL is slated to serve more than 1.5 million international passengers annually.



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Kartik Mohta, Director



I have been fortunate to do business with Japan, recently. Initially when I wanted to explore the Japanese market, I did receive advice from some of my friends to continue with my other foreign customers and not to waste my time with the Japanese market, for, I was told that it is a closed market and not easy to penetrate and furthermore, it takes a long time for the Japanese to decide. It's been a great pleasure for me in doing business with Japan, though I started my trading activities with Japan recently. I have a long way to go in the journey, but I would like to share some of my thoughts.

Japan has a very strong history and culture. Their business is highly ethical and the Japanese businessmen are transparent in their business dealings and they expect the same from their counterparts. My Japanese counterparts know the company from which I source the material that I export to them and also of my other overseas and Japanese clientele. Believe me, they respect and maintain the sales channel, truly reflecting their strong business values.

You need to gain their trust and this process may take some time, but once it is achieved, then be rest assured that your business with them is secured. My personal experience is that they attach a lot of importance to quality than price. I would also like to caution that they do not like to be reminded or pressurized, since they take some time to move to the next step. The slow business methods are backed by very detailed and accurate business processes which they lay down from time to time.

My company is currently carrying out trading business with Japan. Apart from this we also offer value added services to our customers in Japan such as facilitating visits of the Japanese companies to the Indian manufacturers facility, communicate to the Japanese company regarding the manufacturer's production capacity, factory cleanliness, environmental policies, quality control methods etc. I pay tremendous attention and share with them the information and photos at every stage of my execution of their order. This will go a long way in assuring them that you are not deviating from the quality of the product assured and also the time schedule agreed upon.

I also consider it utmost important to develop a good interpersonal relationship with them and share our cultural and family values etc. in further building the trust. I am aware that 80% of Japan's economy is constituted by the SMEs. My vision is to support Japanese SME's to source high quality products from India and to establish a long lasting relationship with companies in Japan.

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