



## Development of North Eastern Indian Region and Neighborhood: India-Japan Collaboration for Fostering Entrepreneurship and People Connectivity



### Second Intellectual Dialogue

3 March 2022

For registration, please fill up the form at : Link: <https://bit.ly/3G8UuDr> or scan QR Code



# Concept Note

The Asian Confluence in collaboration with the Embassy of Japan, New Delhi proposes to host the second intellectual dialogue on the theme: “Development of North Eastern Indian Region: Indo-Japan Collaboration for Fostering Entrepreneurship and People Connectivity” on 3 March 2022.

Lying at the underbelly of the mighty Himalayas and the littoral of the Bay of Bengal, India’s Eastern and North Eastern states, together with immediate neighbors, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, and Myanmar together comprise a geographically compact and ecologically fragile region. It is commonly agreed that greater connectivity within the region, cooperation in ecologically sustainable practices for management of fragile natural resources along with quality infrastructure development, developing larger regional trade and fostering people to people relations within the region are required enablers for

inclusive growth and shared prosperity for all the states and nations in the region. Recent times have seen renewed vigor in this direction in many dimensions. India's "Neighborhood First" policy as part of its "Act East" is a marker in this direction.

India and Japan have been civilizational partners since time immemorial. However, as recent times have seen a strategic convergence of India's "Act East" and "Neighborhood First" policies and Japan's vision of "Free and Open Indo-Pacific". With the relationship deepening in manifold dimensions, India-Japan relations have seen a new "high" in recent times. The creation of the "Act East Forum" at the highest level of government in India was a follow up of the political will at the very top. Developing collaboration between India and Japan towards development of the North Eastern region of India has been one of the key components of this strategic convergence.

The Northeastern states are as such landlocked. But the region put together, enjoys close proximity to the Bay of Bengal. It is ecologically connected to the Bay of Bengal through a unique "mountain to sea" contiguous landscape. Connectivity and cooperation with the nations of the Bay of Bengal thus hold enormous possibility for trade, investment, cultural contacts and joint efforts and holistic conservation of the fragile bio diversity of the region. A prosperous Bay of Bengal is also a key component of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific.

Japan is also a development partner in all the other nation states and several projects on connectivity and conservation are underway with Japanese assistance. India too has been driving several ongoing development projects (connectivity, education, disaster resilience, power etc.) within this region. India-Japan collaboration for development of connectivity, ecological conservation, fostering regional trade for creating sustainable livelihoods both within the states of the North Eastern Indian region as well as with neighboring countries in the BBIN and ASEAN region can be a stable pathway to shared peace and prosperity. There is great potential in delving deeper on how development cooperation between India and Japan can further deepen and extend to multiple

sectors that are in tune with the economic and social aspirations of the region as a whole, while maintaining ecological integrity.

Towards this, Japan has been actively engaged in several projects of connectivity, livelihood generation and capacity building in the North-eastern states. Building on these initiatives already underway, there is large scope and benefits from exploring ways and means to further deepen cooperation between Japan and North-east Indian states by convening intellectual, commercial, and cultural exchanges with vibrant exchange of ideas, skills, and experiences. This can connect institutions, ideas and champions on the ground and further people to people interactions to unleash the full benefits of connectivity. The role of the intellectuals, young entrepreneurs and other stakeholders from the region will be key to this effort.

In March 2021 the Asian Confluence, in collaboration with the embassy of Japan held a dialogue on online mode. A follow up intellectual dialogue, complemented by a series of initiatives is proposed in March 2022 to bring out the potential of collaboration based on the unique and diverse characteristics of each state in the region and promoting interstate collaborations. Various universities and institutions across all the state would be invited to participate this two-day dialogue held in hybrid mode. The Conference will be divided into 3 Sessions, on 'Inaugural', 'Empowering Entrepreneurs' and 'Fostering People to People Contact'.

## **AGENDA**

**( names in Bold are confirmed)**

### **Inaugural :**

**10:00 am to 10: 45 am**

- Setting the context
- State of present engagement and current initiatives
- Building on the Act East Forum
- Connectivity with neighbor counties

**Chair: Mr. M.P. Bezbaruah**, Chairman Asian Confluence, Governing Council

**Introduction to the theme: Sabyasachi Dutta,**  
ED, Asian Confluence

**Welcome by Chair :**

**Inaugural Addresses: H.E. Mr. SUZUKI Satoshi,**  
Ambassador of Japan to India

**Keynote Address: Smt. Smita Pant**  
Joint Secretary, BM,  
Ministry of External Affairs  
India

**Vote of Thanks: Sabyasachi Dutta,**  
ED, Asian Confluence

### **SESSION 1 : Empowering Entrepreneurs**

**10: 50 am – 12:20 pm**

This session will layout the Indo-Japanese viewpoint on some of the following topics:

- Overcoming obstacles to ease of doing business
- Sharing with Japanese Entrepreneurs
- Overview of target sectors and mechanisms for collaborations possible
- Focus on Agri-Horti-Forestry-Farm Sector
- Connectivity with Neighbor countries

**Chair : Amb. Deepa Gopalan Wadhwa, former Ambassador of India to Japan, Member Governing Council, Asian Confluence**

- **Mr. Kunihiko Kawazu,**  
Minister & Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan
- **Mr. Kazuhide Sugimoto**  
Sugimoto Shoten, Japanese Mushroom Company,  
Recipient of Sustainable Award by Ministry of  
Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Japan.
- **Mr. K. N. Kumar,**  
Chairman Meghalaya Farmers Commission
- **Mr. Kamesh Salam,**  
Founder & Executive Director, South Asia Bamboo  
Foundation CEO, Cane and Bamboo Value Chain  
Management(OPC) Pvt. Ltd.
- **Mr. Mitsunori Saito,**  
Director, JICA India

- **Mr. Yasuyuki Murahashi**  
Chief Director General, JETRO New Delhi
- **Mr. K.K.Dwivedi,**  
Principal Secretary, Trade and Commerce, Assam

## **INTERACTION**

### **SESSION 2: Fostering People to People Contact**

**12:25 pm – 1:55 pm**

This session will layout the Indo-Japanese viewpoint on some of the following topics:

- Cross Cultural Communication
- Education Sector
- Tourism Sector
- Indo-Japan collaboration for empowering Entrepreneurship
- Capacity Building for entrepreneurs
- Job opportunities in Japan
- Mobilizing youth
- Cultural collaborations for creating culture based services

**Mr. Rajat Nag, Former Managing Director Asian Development Bank, Member Governing Council, Asian Confluence**

- **Mr. Satoshi Yonemaru**  
Economic Section, Embassy of Japan
- **Dr. T. G. Sitharam,**  
Director, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Guwahati
- **Ms .Yui Nakamura,**  
Sasakawa Peace Foundation
- **Mr. Ajay Sethi,**  
Managing Partner, ASA Associates
- **Mr. Enamul Haque,**  
Professor of Economics, East West University, Dhaka,  
Director Asian Center for Development, Bangladesh
- **Mr. Koji Sato**  
Director General, Japan Foundation India

## **INTERACTION :**

**Vote of Thanks**

**1:55 pm – 2:00 pm**