

# 'Abenomics can give a fillip to Modinomics'

## We Can Boost 'Make In India' Plan: Japanese FM

Japan's foreign minister Fumio Kishida chose India as his first destination after being reappointed foreign minister. Here he shares Japan's views on bilateral ties with Indrani Bagchi.

■ After the visit by PM Narendra Modi to Japan in September 2014, what would you say are the priority areas to advance the India-Japan relationship, and what has been the progress since?

I consider deepening the Japan-India relationship critically important for the future of the Indo-Pacific region. People-to-people exchanges between Japan and India have grown, including at summit and ministerial levels. Leading-edge technologies utilizing IT, which is India's forte, will bring the two countries closer. In fact, PM Narendra Modi and PM Shinzo Abe frequently exchange messages on Twitter, and I just received an online greeting card from minister (Sushma) Swaraj.

Japan and India share fundamental values and strategic interests and fulfil an important role in promoting peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region. We also are a source of significant strength in dealing with common challenges such as UN Security Council reform, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, peacekeeping and combating terrorism.

■ Japan is a priority country for the 'Make in India' plan. The PM has set up 'Japan Plus' body to help Japanese companies. Is this working, say in bringing the Shinkansen bullet trains to India?

With the catchphrase "Come, Make in India", the PM's "Modinomics" which place high priority on attracting investment in manufacturing, generates synergies with Abenomics, which advocates the creation of new markets and greater integration with global economy.

I appreciate highly the establishment of Japan Plus, which help Japanese companies coming to India and improve the business environment. According to a survey, India secured the first place as the most promising business destination for the medi-



PM Narendra Modi with Japanese foreign minister Fumio Kishida in New Delhi on Friday. Kishida is on a three-day visit to the country

um-term for Japanese companies. The number of Japanese companies operating in India has been increasing every year and has exceeded 1,200.

Japan believes the Shinkansen will help realize the 'Diamond Quadrilateral' concept advocated by PM Modi. Currently, we are conducting a joint feasibility study on the Ahmedabad-Mumbai route. Introducing Japan's highly safe and reliable high-speed railway technologies in India will make a major contribution to the 'Make in India' policy.

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FUMIO KISHIDA  
Japanese finance minister

■ What, in your opinion, are the challenges of 2015? What is the current state of China-Japan relations?

The Pacific and the Indian Oceans are beginning to link together as the oceans of freedom and prosperity. Countries here are achieving remarkable economic development, and the world's centre of gravity is shifting. At the same time, we have seen an increase in new

challenges climate change, pandemics and terrorism, even the maintenance of open seas. We have the responsibility and ability to lead the effort in responding to such issues, because our partnership has no third country as a target.

On Japan-China relations, Japan-China leaders met for the first time in two years on the margins of the APEC summit in Beijing. We agreed to improve our ties.

■ There was disappointment here that India and Japan could not complete the nuclear agreement. What is holding it back?

During last September's summit, we had a candid exchange of views regarding the negotiations on the civil nuclear cooperation agreement. The two Prime Ministers agreed to speed up negotiations on the agreement to conclude it at an early date. I have brought the same message during the strategic dialogue this time.

■ What is the substance of your conversations with Sushma Swaraj?

We will exchange views on securing peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and cooperation on UN Security Council reforms. We also have a political dialogue and security cooperation including joint exercises. We will exchange views on improving the business environment in India, and cooperation in the infrastructure sector. Minister Swaraj and I will also discuss the two governments' efforts for strengthening regional connectivity with state-of-the-art infrastructure for people in Northeast India.

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