

第4回日印インド太平洋フォーラムでの大臣ビデオメッセージ（字幕用英文）

Namaskar. Good afternoon.

Allow me to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the organizers of this 4th Japan-India Indo-Pacific Forum, a vital platform for pooling our wisdom.

The world is in a period of historic change and facing various issues, such as COVID-19's impact on the economy and society, and challenges to international order based on the rule of law in our oceans and economic activities. Under these circumstances, it is imperative for Japan and India, which have been advocating the importance of a rules-based order and governance under the rule of law, to work closely together to tackle common tasks.

The theme of today's forum is "Partnership for a Free and Open Indo-Pacific."

A "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," so-called FOIP, which is a vision that Japan and India share, drives the efforts of rule-making that will provide stability in the coming era. The importance of FOIP has been recognized in recent years by countries around the world, and I feel that the expectations for the roles of Japan and India towards realizing FOIP are rising sharply.

As "Special Strategic and Global Partners," who share fundamental values, such as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law as well as strategic interests, Japan and India have been deepening cooperation in broad areas, including politics and security, trade and investment, and economic cooperation, such as the High Speed Railway project.

I, myself, had the opportunity to have a telephone conversation with Dr. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India, after I assumed the position of Foreign Minister last month. We agreed to elevate Japan-India relations, which Dr. Jaishankar cites in his recent book as, "the most natural strategic equation in Asia", to an even higher level, through tangible cooperation in various areas. We shared our strong opposition to any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea and South China Sea, as well as to any economic coercion. Also, we confirmed that our two countries would deepen cooperation on economic security, including through

establishing resilient supply chains.

Towards realizing FOIP, our cooperation is steadily progressing not only in the bilateral context but also in the Quad (Japan, India, Australia, and the United States). In the first face-to-face Quad Leaders' Summit held in Washington, D.C. in September, the four leaders expressed strong commitments to the Indo-Pacific region in their efforts towards achieving FOIP. They also welcomed the outcomes that are being steadily accumulated through practical cooperation in such areas as vaccines, critical and emerging technologies, and climate change, and agreed to also advance cooperation in the areas of infrastructure, space, cybersecurity, clean energy and people-to-people exchange.

Japan is determined to strengthen collaboration with like-minded partners in this way towards realizing FOIP. India's role in "the most natural strategic equation in Asia" is at the core of this endeavour. Japan takes the lead for the Connectivity pillar of the "Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative" advanced by India, and we intend to strongly support the initiative.

The year 2022 marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and India. I hope that through lively discussions at today's forum, our "Special Strategic and Global Partnership" will further blossom by unleashing its great potential in this memorable year. Your continued support would be highly appreciated.
Dhanyavaad. Thank you.