

Minutes of the third meeting of Indo Japan Friendship Group held on 30/8/08 at the India International Centre, New Delhi

The Ship for World Youth Alumni Association-India (SWYAA-India) has formed the Indo-Japan Friendship Group to promote cross cultural exchange between India and Japan by holding informal meetings every month to actively promote the objectives of the friendship group. The Friendship Group of SWYAA-India involves many activities organized informally.

The first and second meetings of the Indo-Japan friendship group were held at the India International Centre, New Delhi on May 24 and June 28 2008 respectively. Information about each other was traded and crystallization of fruitful exchange of plans and ideas began.

The third meeting of the Indo-Japan Friendship Group was held on Saturday, August 30, 2008 at the Private Dining Hall of the India International Centre, Max Mueller Marg, New Delhi from 6:00-8:00 pm followed by dinner.



The following members attended the meeting:

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| 1. Mr. S.C.Tripathi | Former Secretary to Government of India |
| 2. Mr Koji Yamada | Deputy Resident Representative, JICA India |
| 3. Mr Toshiyuki Abe | Vice President, Mitsui Chemicals |
| 4. Mr. U.K.S.Chauhan | Treasurer, SWYAA-India |
| 5. Dr. Ashok Jain | President, MOSAI Institute, New Delhi |
| 6. Mr. Ravi Chopra | General Secretary, SWYAA-India |
| 7. Prof. R.S.Ratna | Centre for W.T.O. Studies, Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, New Delhi |
| 8. Mr. Chanchal Sarkar | Deputy Director, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Government of India |
| 9. Mr. S.V. Nair | Media Advisor, Russian Center for Science and Culture, Embassy of Russian Federation |
| 10. Mrs. Syama Nair | PRO, Adhunik Group of Industries |
| 11. Dr. Zahiruddin | President, DISHA |
| 12. Dr. Lubna Nafees | Lecturer, IMT, Ghaziabad |
| 13. Mrs. Shobhana Radhakrishna | Chief Executive, DISHA & SWYAA-India |
| 14. Mr. Sunil Basumatry | Member, SWYAA-India |
| 15. Mr. Vineet Sondhi | OISCA-North India |
| 16. Mr. Manjit Kumar | Ex-PY of SWY |
| 17. Mr. Esan | Engineer |
| 18. Mr.Abhay Kumar | DISHA, New Delhi |
| 19. Mr. Ashok Kumar | DISHA, New Delhi |

The program was as under:

6.00 P.M	Arrival of Friends
6.15 P.M	Welcome by Shri U.P.S.Chauhan
6.25 P.M	20th Commemorative year program by Mr. Ravi Chopra
6.35 P.M	Address on Indo Japan Trade by Prof. R.S.Ratna and Shri Chanchal Sarkar
7.05 P.M	Address by Mr. Koji Yamada
7.15 P.M	Address by Mr. Toshiyuki Abe
7.25 P.M	Address by Dr. Ashok Jain
7.35 P.M	Address by Mr. S.V. Nair
7.40 P.M	Presentation about OISCA by Shri Vinit Sondhi
7.50 P.M	Sharing by Shri Sunil Basumatary
7.55 P.M	Vote of thanks

Mr. U.K.S. Chauhan, Ex-NL (SWY6), Treasurer of SWYAA-India extended a warm welcome to the participants who had gathered there for supporting the group's initiatives. He explained in brief the objectives of the Indo-Japan Friendship Group formed by SWYAA-India to commemorate the SWY 20th anniversary in 2008. The aim was to involve members other than the Ex-Participating youth of the Ship for World Youth Programme for wider coverage of cultural exchange and people to people contacts under the aegis of SWYAA-India.



Ship for World Youth Alumni Association–India (SWYAA-India) is a registered society of ex-participating youth (Ex-PYs) from India who were the members in the Ship for World Youth (SWY) program of Government of Japan and the Ministry of Sports & Youth Affairs, Government of India. SWYAA-India was registered in 2007 under various -INDIA is to harness the potential towards promotion of international understanding provisions of Government of India and has a legal standing.

The main aim of SWYAA is to harness the potential towards promotion among Ex-PYS of India, International Youth Exchange Organization (IYEO), Japan and sister organizations of other SWY participating countries. SWYAA-INDIA is taking an active role in global youth networking, promoting cultural exchange, friendship and taking up youth promotional activities in various states and regions of the country.

Mr. Ravi Chopra, Ex-NL (SWY6), General Secretary of SWYAA-India gave an overview by showing a film about the Ship For World Youth program (SWY), presentation about SWYAA-India activities and plans for celebrating SWY 20th anniversary commemorative year events by SWYAA-India.

He brought to the notice of the participants that the Indo-Japan Friendship Group was formed by SWYAA-India as part of commemorative events of SWY 20th year. This group has provided an opportunity to involve people from diverse interests for working together for fulfilling the objectives of SWYAA-India.



He requested the participants to extend support to SWYAA-India in realising all the programs and activities and provide guidance for future course of actions.

Professor R.S. Ratna of Centre for WTO Studies, Government of India spoke about historical relationship and synergy between the two countries, India and Japan. He spoke about the broad-based negotiations of economic and cultural trade between India and Japan in 2007 for free trade for import of goods, market access, investment promotion and joint collaborations and other areas of economic cooperation.



He explained that some of the goods included many hi-tech items imported for complimentary industries. Services included professional services, natural personnel, Chartered Accountant legal professionals, business outsourcing etc. The biggest challenge in service integration is the requirement of trained personnel in Japanese language. Barrier to progress has been the lack of personnel speaking Japanese language. Therefore, he emphasised that for service integration it was essential to focus on learning Japanese. Japan is the fourth largest investor in India. India needs assistance for development the infrastructure, setting up industrial corridors in 20 cities with 20000 industries.

He informed the gathering that to forge this investment and to bring technology to India, the Indian Prime Minister Honourable Dr. Manmohan Singh would be visiting Japan later this year.

He pointed out that SWYAA-India can play a crucial role in these issues by providing policy directions to the government to promote recreational and cultural exchange through the youth exchange programs, promoting youth to learn of Japanese language and lay more emphasis on cultural exchange. UNESCO convention 2005 promotes cultural goods and services in the website for youth programs, maintaining heritage. SWYAA could play a crucial role here as well with its network and could actively interface with both the Indian and Japanese government in this regard.

The next presenter was Mr. Chanchal Sarkar, Deputy Director, Ministry of Commerce, Government of India who maintained that firm economic relations can not be thought of without trade relations. Japan had many more requirements and notifications to comply with than in India and there were clear instances of not understanding each others systems.

He cited the example of the export of mango in the agricultural sector which took very long due to lack of information. With no mutual agreements in this regard trade promotion rate has slowed down. All three aspects of non farming trading, technology trading and service needs be taken up at all levels for reaching the desirable destination for better cooperation.



He said that SWYAA-India could reach out to both the governments well as the non government organisations in this regard to give suggestion in this regard.

Mr. U.K.S. Chauhan summarised the presentation and said that learning Japanese language is very important to build relationships between India and Japan. He informed the participants that SWYAA-India's endeavour would be to work towards creating new learning forum for language, promoting youngsters of class 10th -12th to learn Japanese, undertaking analysis of the key sectors, commodities, goods and services to get clearer ideas and seeking guidance from the Indo-Japan Friendship Group.

Mr. Koji YAMADA, Deputy Resident Representative, Japan India Cooperation Agency (JICA) informed the gathering that he was representing the Resident Representative of the JICA.

JICA has over 40 years of experience in providing cooperation in social, health, infrastructure development and rural development sectors.



He said that from October 2008 JBIC and JICA would be one institute. As a point of interest he also informed us that two of the Ex-JPYs were JICA staff round the world.

Informing about the promotion of Japanese language, JICA has been extending support to Japanese student volunteers by having them over in Delhi as Japanese language instructors. Currently eight volunteers are working in Delhi and in two years the number would reach up to 25. This would provide and enhance more opportunities to interact with Japanese people.



Speaking about the specific opportunities for SWYAA-India to collaborate with JICA was in his views very important for identifying host families for home stay for the volunteers who come initially for three weeks to India. The initial requirement for home stay is for one week. He said that it is very difficult to find the families willing to support home stay of Japanese volunteers in India and JICA would look towards SWYAA-India in supporting this aspect.

JICA also promotes the JICA Alumni Association and it would be possible to link this Alumni Association with SWYAA-India to participate in their cultural programs, environmental activities and health camps. Both the Alumni Associations can work together for the cultural exchange programme.

He extended an invitation to SWYAA-India to see the Health Camp being held in October by the Alumni Association. Mr. Koji informed about the technical Seminar being held by JICA next January 2009 and said that he would let SWYAA-India know about this.

About the linkage with JBIC he informed that JICA works with Japanese NGOs and in case any Japanese NGO wants to start collaboration with local NGOs it may be possible to start exchange of information about future work. In this event how SWYAA-India can network could have to be worked out.

Mr. Toshiyuki ABE, Vice President of Mitsui Chemicals Ltd. and Ex-JPY appreciated SWYAA-India's initiatives of bringing others on board through the Indo-Japan Friendship Group for promoting closer ties and people to people contact between India and Japan. He felt that more Japanese involvement is necessary and he would be responsible for extending help to SWYAA-India to take up more Japanese involvement.



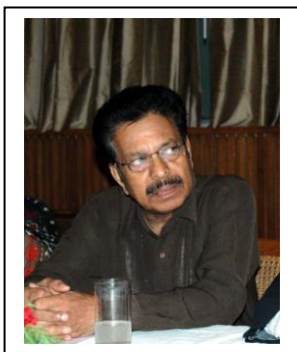
Dr. Ashok Jain, President of MOSAI Institute explained about his background in academics and his work in Indian Embassy in Japan. He informed the participants that through the MOSAI Institute he has been organising courses in Japanese language in Delhi with 400 students. However, the demand is much higher than the availability of qualified teachers. He explained that Japanese language required years of long learning at school and university levels.

Appreciating the unique position of SWYAA-India he said that there are immense possibilities in Gandhian approach to technology based on promoting crafts and handicrafts. He pointed out that Japan is very strong in traditional cultural products. They regard their master craftsmen and place them at highest levels. This is lost in India where as Japanese society emphasises this. Japanese society considers artists to be the cultural assets of their country.



He suggested that SWYAA-India could direct its efforts in this poignant yet neglected area in its own unique way.

He gave further ideas about honouring Japanese Gandhian scholars promoting peace and non-violence and work toward setting up a Japan Bhavan in line with China Bhavan and Maxmuellar Bhavan to bring the culture of Japan in one place.



Mr. S.V. Nair conveyed best wishes from his son who is an Ex-PY who had represented India twice in the SWY program.

He spoke about greater media coverage for SWYAA-India activities as it was important to let people know about the existence and activities of SWYAA-India.

Mr. Vinit Sondhi, OISCA International (North India) gave a short presentation on their activities in the field of agriculture and environment in Delhi, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh with school children. He said that OISCA would be looking forward to networking with SWYAA-India in their activities.



Mr. Sunil Basumatary, Ex-NL (SWY18) who is a coordinator with National Service Scheme, programme of Government of India expressed that they are working with 3.2 million students across India in 1500 institutions and have promoted the largest student organisation in the country and he would look forward to having SWYAA-India collaborate with all the programs of National Service Scheme, Nehru Yuva Kendra and other non student organisation for promoting national integration and harmony.

Dr. Lubna Nafis, Lecturer, IMT, Ghaziabad expressed that many students are taking initiatives for volunteering from the management institutes. Forum like the Indo-Japan Friendship Group will go a long way in promoting closer ties between the youth of both India and Japan supported by SWYAA-India.



Mr. Manjeet Singh, Ex-PY (SWY16) appreciated the opportunity that a group had been created for involving more people other than the Ex-PYs in SWYAA-India activities and lauded this initiative.

Mr. S.C.Tripathi, Former Secretary to Government of India advised SWYAA-India to expand the group by involving more and younger Japanese residents living in Delhi for promoting greater people to people contact by involving the younger generation.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks and was followed by dinner.

RAVI CHOPRA
General Secretary