

National, April 2022

70TH ANNIVERSARY OF JAPAN AND INDIA RELATIONSHIP



In 2022, India and Japan complete 70 years of remarkable friendly relationship. Both nations continue to support each other strongly in various fields and are ready to shape the future together, based on the firm foundation of common values and traditions. One of the most recent and on-going example of collaboration is the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail project. Today, Japan is one of the biggest investors to India, and provide supports for various projects. Duo have a long history rooted in spiritual affinity, cultural and people exchange.

It is said that the exchange between Japan and India to have begun in the 6th century when Buddhism was introduced to Japan. Since then, thousands of Buddhist temples in Japan were built-in. Large Buddha statue (called **Daibutsu** in Japanese) and temples itself are one of the most popular tourist attractions to foreign tourists along with numerous tourist spots around it. There are popular day-trip tours for wonderful spots near the Buddha statues.

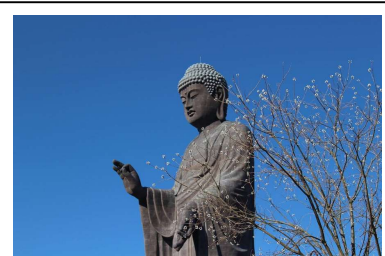
Top 5 Daibutsu (Large Buddha Statues) famous tourist spots are:

Kamakura Daibutsu, Kanagawa: Kamakura is popular seaside tourist destination from Tokyo and has many famous temples. The majestic sitting Buddha statue is located in Kotokuin Temple. Kamakura offers photogenic landscape and is quite famous among young generation.

The Great Buddha, Nara: The Great Buddha in Todaiji Temple is one of the most famous and popular Buddha statues in Japan. The Great Buddha and Todaiji Temple are located in Nara Park where over 1,000 wild deer's inhabit. Todaiji Temple is one of the world heritage sites in Japan. If you travel in Kyoto or Osaka, Nara is the best side trip destination.



Ushiku Daibutsu, Ibaraki: It is the 2nd tallest bronze statue in the world after Statue of Unity in Gujarat at a height of 120 meters. Visitors can go inside the Buddha statue's body consisting of five floors and some cultural experiences are offered there; and have observatory on the 5th floor (at a height of about 85 meters).



USHIKU DAIBUTSU, IBARAKI

Sendai Daikannon, Miyagi: The 100 meters tall standing statue is located in the largest city, Sendai, the capital of Miyagi prefecture which is the 2nd tallest statue in Japan. Visitors can go inside the standing statue through the dragon-shaped entrance, which is of 12 floors. Taking the elevator to the top floor let you view the superb scenery of the town from observation windows.



SENDAI DAIKANNON, TOHOKU

The Reclining Buddha in Nanzoin Temple, Fukuoka: The Buddha statue located to the east of Fukuoka City has a height of 11 meters and length of 41 meters. The reclining Buddha depicts the last moments of Gautam Buddha's mortal life before he achieved nirvana (A state of freedom from suffering, desire, karma and the cycle of birth). Fukuoka itself is a hot tourist destination for delicious regional food such as Tempura, Ramen and Yakitori at stall along the canal.



RECLINING BUDDHA in NANZOIN TEMPLE, FUKUOKA

Indian culture, filtered through Buddhism, has had a great impact on Japanese culture, and this is the source of the Japanese people's sense of closeness to India. Japan - India relationship was further strengthen by the visits of Indian spiritual leaders to Japan. Indian luminaries travelled to Japan and left a huge impact in contributing to the friendship between the two countries.

In 1893, Swami Vivekananda travelled to Japan from Nagasaki, Osaka, Kyoto, and Tokyo before eventually heading for Yokohama. He had only one message for the young students of India, "Look East", Go to Japan for studies. Learn from them about the Development Strategy of the Meiji Government along with other traits of the Japanese discipline,

cleanliness, etc. In 1916, Dr. Rabindranath Tagore visited Japan. Japanese Nationalism; in addition to the aesthetic Tradition, Art and Nature greatly influenced him and it can be seen in his work as an author.

Historically, Japan and India have spiritual affinity. Many Japanese deities originated from Indian mythology. For example, Kisshoten, also known as Kishijoten is a Japanese female deity of fortune adapted from the Vedic Goddess Maha Lakshmi. Goddess Saraswati is worshipped as Benzaiten, whereas Lord Ganesha is worshipped as Shoten. God Brahma is known as Bonten. God Visnu the 'Preserver' appears in Japan in the names Bichuten and his mount Garuda is known as Karua.

Both cultures have a rich history and integral respect system attached to elderly manners. People from two nations worshipping nature, attributing divinely qualities to rivers, mountains, trees, etc... often personifying them. The people of Japan bow to people while Indians touch the feet of elders to show their respect or say Namaste (respectful greetings) by joining hands. This year 2022 Japan and India celebrate the 70th anniversary of their friendship with great pride and honor.

About Japan National Tourism Organization:

The Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) was founded in 1964 with the mission of enticing foreign travelers to Japan. Affiliated with the Japan Tourism Agency of the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism, JNTO has effectively functioned as the Japanese government bureau of tourism. It has 24 tourism-promotion-oriented offices across the world, and a large network of suppliers for tourism and event services in Japan.

JNTO Website: <https://www.japan.travel/en/in/>

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