



## “India and Japan: New Imperatives in the emerging Asian Geopolitics”



**New Delhi, 18<sup>th</sup> November:** Ahead of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe’s visit to India later this year, the Ananta Aspen Centre organized a special session on “India and Japan: New Imperatives in the emerging Asian Geopolitics” in New Delhi today.

The session reflected on how the bilateral relationship between India and Japan has shaped over the years and also focus on the new opportunities of cooperation between the two countries in the emerging Asian geopolitics. Chaired by Amb Biren Nanda, Former High Commissioner of India to Australia, the discussion featured Dr Srabani Roy Choudhury, Professor, School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Amb Aftab Seth, Former Ambassador of India to Japan and Prof Tomohiko Taniguchi, Special Advisor to the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (via video link from Tokyo).

Hailing the relationship, the discussants asserted, "Our relations with Japan have travelled over a long distance. The Tokyo declaration has helped articulate the need for a robust economic

and political partnership. Japan has made significant infrastructure investment in India, and we are also strengthening our bilateral security cooperation." However, concern was expressed on the fact that Japanese investment in India was growing, but only gradually. "The economic content of our bilateral partnership continues to lag behind the political energy," said the panelists.

India has an ancient link with Japan that goes back to 1500 years. Since the historic visit of PM Yoshiro Mori to India in August 2000 and the signing the "Global Partnership" agreement between the two countries, our ties have grown rapidly. Both countries share values of democracy, rule of law and freedom of speech. Japan and India meet at the summit level at least once a year and at the level of Foreign, Defence, Energy and Commerce Minister also on an annual basis.

This close engagement underlines the richness of the relationship which is free of any baggage, historical or otherwise. The 21st Century has seen a remarkable expansion of these relations in the economic sphere and especially in the area of defence cooperation. There are flagship projects like the Delhi - Bombay corridor and the Bangalore - Madras corridor which are major Japanese contributions to India's infrastructure.