KIZUNA INDIA JAPAN STUDY FORUM and
CSIR - NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATION AND POLICY RESEARCH

Invite you to a Lecture on

The Culture of Science & Higher Education in India and Japan: Historical perspectives, current issues and tips for exchanges

By Professor Yoshiro Azuma, Visiting Professor, Physics Department, BITS Pilani Goa Campus

Date: March 21, 2025 | Time: 3:00 - 4:30 p.m. IST | Venue: NIScPR Vivekananda hall and Zoom Platform

Programme coordinators: Dr Vipan Kumar & Dr Naresh Kumar

03.00 - 03.05 p.m.	Introductory remarks: Prof. Sushila Narsimhan
03.05 - 03.10 p.m.	Opening remarks by: Prof. Deepak Kumar
03.10 - 03.40 p.m.	Lecture: Prof. Yoshiro Azuma
03.40 - 03.50 p.m.	Observations by the Discussant: Dr Ashok Jain
03.50 - 04.10 p.m.	Open Discussion
04.10 - 04.15 p.m.	Closing Remarks: Prof. Sushila Narsimhan
04.15 - 04.30 p.m.	High Tea

FOR PARTICIPATION ON ZOOM SCAN OR CLICK HERE

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89568581429

Invitees who wish to attend the lecture in person are requested to inform us by sending an email to director@niscpr.res.in

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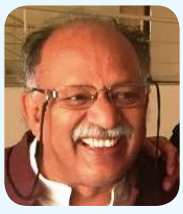
The Kizuna India Japan Study Forum

About The Kizuna India Japan Study Forum is aimed at promoting the study of under-researched aspects of India-Japan historical and cultural interactions by holding lectures on a monthly basis. This will open avenues for all young and old researchers / scholars to share and exchange their work encapsulating rich history and contacts between the two countries in trade, business, and economic, cultural, philosophical spheres. This would not only enhance mutual understanding but also strengthen the foundations of rapidly expanding multifaceted cooperation between the two countries.

CHAIR



Prof. Deepak Kumar is a distinguished professor (retired) of the History of Science and Education at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is associated with numerous universities in India and abroad and held visiting fellowships at Cambridge, London, Leiden, and the Smithsonian Institution. He also taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and York University, Toronto. His seminal work, *Science and the Raj: A Study of British India*, examines the impact of colonial rule on European scientific development. In *The Trishanku Nation (2017)*, he explores India's scientific and educational challenges. Kumar analyzed Western medical discourse in colonial India, arguing that it reinforced scientific hegemony. His extensive publications, cataloged in WorldCat, span English, German, Arabic, and Hindi.

SPEAKER

Prof. Yoshiro Azuma, a PhD degree in Physics from University of Oregon has rich experience of scientific research and teaching both in the 'Western and Eastern Cultures': University of British Columbia ,Argonne National Laboratory, and High Energy Accelerator Research Organization in the West and in the East, Universities of Gakushin and Sophia in Japanand IIT New Delhi in India. Since retiring as Professor from Sophia University he has been a Visiting Professor at IITs in India. Besides Atomic and molecular physics his other research interest is in History of science with focus on Japanese culture of research and higher education in science.

DISCUSSANT

Dr. Ashok Jain, President of Mombusho Scholars Association of India (MOSAI) has a PhD degree in Physics and is a Fellow of National Academy of Sciences, India. He retired as Director of National Institute of Science Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS), has been on the Physics Faculty of University of Delhi, a Research Fellow at Kyoto University, Japan, Bristol University, UK., First Secretary (Science), Indian Embassy, Tokyo , Director, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India. He is recipient of Emperor of Japan's Medal of Honor. MOSAI has received commendation from Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan for its contributions to promoting India-Japan cooperation in education and academic areas.

"The Culture of Science and Higher Education in Japan and India: Historical Perspectives, Current Issues and Tips for Exchange"

Yoshiro AZUMA
Physics Department, BITS Pilani Goa Campus

ABSTRACT

Studying science in Japan was historically a cross-cultural experience in itself since modern science was originally introduced from the West. Today, science and scientific methodologies appear to be well woven into the Japanese intellectual fabric, and the Western-ness of science is hardly felt at all by either students or teachers. Many would say cultural issues should be irrelevant to science education and research since science is objective and logical. Nevertheless, the differences in the teaching and appreciation of science in Japan and Western universities have been felt strongly by some faculties with international experience, including myself. While specialization in Japanese education occurs quite early, learning through aggressive exchange of critical inquiries considered very important in the Western tradition seems to start (if it starts at all) only at an advanced stage. The much more important channel of learning in Japan appears to be "assimilation". A historical perspective is important to understand this, and the issue pertains even to cultural and developmental psychology.

Although a late comer compared to Japan, India has become another non-Western country with very impressive science and technology in the last few decades (along with a few other East Asian countries). What can be said in comparison about India which went through a devastating colonial experience that Japan did not suffer from? I am now in my fifth year working as one of just a few Japanese science and engineering professors in India and the only one in physics. I was first at IIT Delhi and then moved to BITS Pilani Goa Campus last summer. I have been overwhelmed by my experience which has been very different from Japan. Many of my observations of Indian science students are still at a superficial level including my amazement at their mathematical dexterity, multi-tasking ability, good English, and their dynamic jugaad-like approach to things. Nevertheless, it is encouraging for the future that Japan and India appear to be so mutually complementary in their approaches.

Not being trained in social sciences, I cannot provide any well-organized discourse, rigorous comparative analysis, or firm conclusion. I only hope to present my impressions, personal ideas, and share some food for thought with the audience.