

Volume 4, Issue 1

# AKARI 明かり



Kaji Higashiyama's "Autumn Aya" (Photo: Yamatane Museum of Art)



MIJSC

## Chairperson's Message

Greetings!

This newsletter aims to capture some of the recent initiatives of the Mizuho India Japan Study Centre (MIJSC) to promote understanding and collaboration between India and Japan.

We are focused on fostering a robust knowledge exchange between India and Japan, particularly within management education. Our efforts include academic programs, research collaborations, and cross-cultural initiatives. These aim to share insights into Japanese business, culture, and technology.

In recent months, there has been substantial expansion in our collaboration with Japanese Universities, including Waseda, Keio, Hitotsubashi, Nagoya, Meiji and Hiroshima. Japanese Universities have shown considerable interest in collaborating and MIJSC will work to serve as an important platform for their India engagement. As part of our collaborative efforts, the MIJSC has invited a distinguished Professor from Keio University to visit IIMB in October as part of our Distinguished Visitors In-residence Programme.

This year we launched a new programme, the Japanese Language Conversation Culture Study Programme (JLCCS). It is intended to equip professionals with basic language and other skills necessary to work with Japanese companies. It is running well and has received an enthusiastic response, including from those who are doing the programme because of their fascination with Japanese society and culture.

As part of our efforts to engage with industry, we have launched a new Executive Education Programme entitled '21st Century Japanese Management: Adopting Best Practices'. Already, two rounds of this course have been successfully completed. Our Lean Manufacturing Programme @ VLCI is doing well and the next edition will draw in 15 Universities across India. Our webinar series, Meijin-Samvad and Tatsujin-Speak continues to receive a good response showing increasing public and professional interest in different facets of India-Japan relations. We have commissioned a white paper for decision makers written by a Japanese expert on the subject of electrification of the Indian Auto Market, which will be released soon for wider public discussion. We are delighted that Mr. Ichiro Hoshino, formerly of Mizuho Bank, has written a book entitled "Discovery of Japan," that has been published by MIJSC. The book is a very useful introduction to different aspects of society, culture and business in Japan.

I wish to thank our Corporate partners most notably Mizuho Bank. I wish to place on record our appreciation for the patronage of Toshiba Corporation and BPL Medical Technologies.

Prof. Jaideep Sarkar  
Chairperson, Mizuho India Japan Study Centre @ IIM Bangalore

## Editor's Note

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the first issue of the Mizuho India Japan Study Centre (MIJSC) newsletter for 2024! We're excited to share our recent activities and initiatives that highlight our dedication to academic excellence and strengthening the bonds between India and Japan.

It has been an eventful year till now and promises to be more so in the coming months! Many initiatives including the flagship initiatives of the webinar series has continued to bring in experts from across the globe and from many diverse disciplines.

The year also started with crossing of many milestones including the launch of two major programs – one on the Lean Manufacturing Practices on the hybrid learning platform and the other on a unique Japanese language program. The completion of the training of first batch of lean experts, who were engineering college faculty from six colleges in Belgaum and Pune, deserved to be celebrated on a big platform and what better than the Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU) campus at Belgavi, with the Vice Chancellor chairing the certification ceremony. This was followed by the launch of a new batch of this program using a unique hybrid learning platform that has been specially designed for this program. This is indeed a first experiment of this kind in India. The Japanese language program, which focuses on building conversational competency, has been very successful. One of the success factors has been the language workshops that have been conducted on a quarterly basis on IIMB campus. You will get a flavour of the participants enjoying these sessions in this volume.

There have been many other new initiatives that have been triggered and are on the anvil. Visitors from overseas, especially from Japan, have been instrumental in the launch of some programs like the executive program with Waseda University. Similarly, there have been many visitors from the prefectures of Nagoya and Osaka as well as senior officials from METI and AOTS who have expressed interest in working with the Centre. We are working on these possibilities.

Stay connected with MIJSC as we continue to explore and contribute to the dynamic relationship between India and Japan.

Warm regards,

Mr. Saideep Rathnam  
Editor

## New Initiatives

### Executive Education Program

#### 21st Century Japanese Management: Adopting Best Practices



One of the felt needs of people working in Japanese Businesses in India and Indian Businesses wanting to do business in Japan has been the lack of awareness of the nuances of doing business in Japan.

This executive development program was launched to bridge this gap and meet the needs of the businesses. The program objectives included an introduction into the core Japanese management practices covering Strategic Thinking, Decision-Making, Operations, and Human Resource Management. It also provided guidance on applying these approaches within the Indian context. The participants learnt approaches using Japanese tools and techniques for building both hard and soft skills and also understood the changes in contemporary Japanese Business Culture and Society, and their implications for the Indian industry.

The key benefits for the participants included gaining insights into successful Japanese Management concepts in negotiation, consensus-building, and teamwork; understanding societal and industrial transformations in Japan and the business opportunities they create; studying Japanese innovation methods and their application in different contexts; developing skills in strategy development and deployment as practiced in Japan; appreciating the role of culture in managing change and learn the skill of culture mapping and acquire a deep understanding of transformational leadership in the Japanese context.

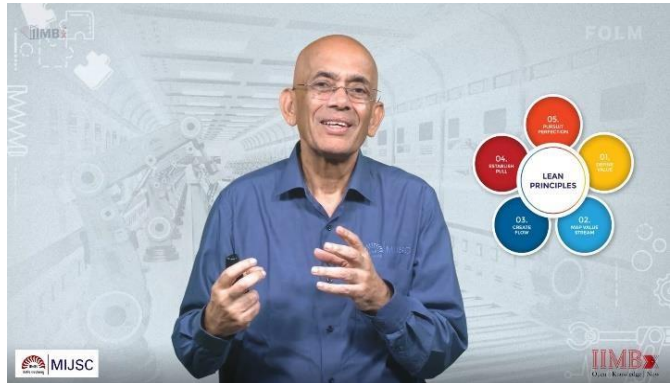
The program has been very well received by businesses and two such programs were conducted in March and April'24. This is planned to be offered again later this academic year.



# MOOC'S Online Course

## Foundations of Lean Manufacturing

The lean paradigm has helped many industries in India and the world to transform their operations and become more creative and productive. However, in order to ensure that knowledge about this process is transferred in a structured and effective manner, the Centre has designed a unique hybrid learning platform which uses MOOC'S online program for self learning and expert interventions and project work for skill building. This Course aims to equip Manufacturing Sector Professionals, Functional Heads, Supervisors, Professors, and Students with essential Lean Manufacturing tools and concepts. Throughout this course, lean principles are explored, demonstrating their applicability in diverse manufacturing environments. The program is designed and offered by Mr. Saideep Rathnam. Learner enrolling in this course will gain insights into key Lean tools and principles necessary for fostering a mindset shift across organizational structures.



**Course Instructor: Saideep Rathnam, Lean Expert**



## Japanese Language Conversation and Culture Study Program

Mizuho India Japan Study Centre proudly launched its first Japanese Language flagship course in January`24. The Program titled “Japanese Language Conversation and Culture Study Program” started in an online format from 17th January. Two native Japanese Language teachers with rich teaching experience are training a total of 67 participants from diverse fields – academics, students and working professionals. The course has 120 Hours of live lessons and spans over 11 months. It aims at equipping the participants with the necessary skills to appear for basic (N5) level of Japanese Language Proficiency Test (JLPT).

Apart from imparting core language skills, this course aims at improving conversational competency and increasing cultural sensitivities of the participants. In addition to the content of textbooks, excerpts from relevant resources are shared with participants on regular basis by our teachers to familiarize them with Cultural Nuances of Japan. Language & culture workshops are held periodically to build these skills, apart from the basic reading and writing skills.



**JLCC Participants at Language Workshop, March 2024**



## Workshop for JLCC Participants at MIJSC, IIMB

Two workshops focusing on building language skills have been conducted till date. One was held in March'24 and the second one in Jun'24. The workshops aimed to improve conversational skills, explore Japanese culture, and facilitate networking. It was conducted in a hybrid format to include those unable to attend in person.

Activities began with Japanese songs and explanation about the symbolism of carp-shaped streamers. Language exercises included “World Café Style” and “Lightning Talk,” with participants divided into groups. Each group engaged in discussions and impromptu presentations in Japanese, showcasing their fluency.

The cultural activities included a chopstick game which was thoroughly enjoyed by all the participants. Other interesting highlights were the Ikebana presentation by Mrs. Deepika Mansingh, and an Origami lesson by Mrs. Geetha Bhat, focusing on the Japanese crane. Motivational talks from JLPT N2 and N4 qualifiers inspired participants.

The workshop concluded with high tea, where participants enjoyed Japanese sweets from Harima and Izanagi and reflected on the event's success. The workshop was well-received, highlighting MIJSC's dedication to immersive language learning experiences.



## Research at MIJSC

The Centre has been funding Research Projects on varied topics, but with overarching theme of building India Japan relationship. From this year, MIJSC has started sponsoring research collaboration with between IIMB faculty and faculty from other reputed universities in Japan. Some of the recent research projects initiated this year are:

### Funded Research Program - IIMB Faculty



#### **Dr. Tirthatanmoy Das**

Associate Professor

Indian Institute of Management Bangalore

**Automation, Aging, Skill Realignment and Labor Market Outcomes in Japan**



#### **Dr. Nishant Kumar Verma**

Assistant Professor Production & Operations Management  
Indian Institute of Management Bangalore

**Studying Triple Helix's (University-Government-Industry) Effect on Start-up Journey: A Comparative Study of India and Japan**

### Research Collaboration with International Faculty



#### **Dr. Tirthatanmoy Das**

Associate Professor  
Economics  
Indian Institute of Management  
Bangalore

#### **Dr. Takahiro Nishi**

Associate Professor  
School of Commerce,  
Faculty of Commerce,  
Meiji University.



**Firm Performance and Board Diversity in Japan: Direct Effect, Firm Efficiency**



## White Paper on Decision Making

This year, the Centre has started a new initiative of sponsoring papers which are useful for decision makers in academia, industry and policy making. The first such paper is just being published in September'24.



### Prof. Nobutaka Kazama

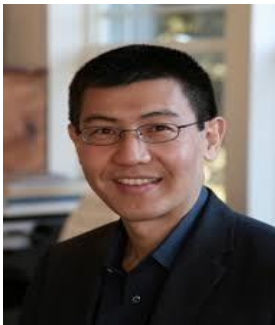
Emeritus Professor at Meiji University.

**How could CASE Revolution Shape Sustainable Society? Global Case Studies including Indian and Japanese Experiences**

## Webinars at MIJSC

September 2023

### How Might AI Reshape Society? Global Case Studies including Indian & Japanese Experiences



**Dr. Kentaro Toyama**  
(Professor, School of Information, University of Michigan)

Prof. Kentaro Toyama argued that Technology generally amplifies existing human forces, whether positive or negative, rather than being inherently good or bad. He emphasized the importance of making AI accessible to everyone, especially in developing nations. He also urged Governments' to integrate AI into Public Services effectively.



**Dr. Subhayan Mukerjee**  
(Assistant Professor, Department of Communications, National University of Singapore)

Prof. Subhayan discussed the impact of AI on Society, including its potential to create and replace jobs. He also emphasized the need for responsible and sustainable AI development and discussed the challenges of regulating AI effectively.



YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3wgN4etgsw>

December 2023

## Is Inclusive Growth a Mirage? Institutional and Technological Innovations in India and Japan

The discussion explored the intersection of Political Economy and International Relations, presenting research aimed at addressing Inequality in socially diverse contexts. The webinar spotlighted the role of Institutional and Technological Innovations in empowering Marginalized Communities, with a particular focus on Japan and India.

Additionally, the session highlighted significant studies related to rural local government institutions, including Grievance Redressal Mechanisms, the Impact of Reservations for Marginalized Groups, and Innovative approaches to identifying poverty, providing a comprehensive perspective on Inclusive Growth in these dynamic regions. Participants gained valuable insights into the Transformative potential of Technology and Innovation in promoting Inclusive Development.

**Dr. Mamidipudi Ramakrishna Sharan**

Assistant Professor,  
Department of  
Agricultural and  
Resource  
Economics,  
University of  
Maryland, College  
Park.



**Dr. Kathryn Iбата-Arens**

Vincent de Paul  
Professor of Political  
Science, Director-  
Global Asian  
Studies, DePaul  
University



YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHo0A0KrI1w>

## Digital Media Revolution: Opportunities & Risks in a Changing World



**Dr. Dhiraj Murthy**

(Professor, Journalism and  
Media Studies, Moody College  
of Communication, University  
of Texas at Austin.)



**Dr. Porismita Borah**

(Les Smith Distinguished Professor,  
Edward R. Murrow College of  
Communication, Graduate Faculty,  
Prevention Science, Washington  
State University.)



**Prof. Corey Takahashi**

(Associate Professor, Magazine,  
News and Digital Journalism,  
S.I. Newhouse School of Public  
Communications, Syracuse

The webinar unfolded a captivating exploration of the ever- evolving Digital Media Landscape, cantering on the theme. Prof. Takahashi initiated the discussion by connecting our theme to generational shifts, highlighting the trend of moving away from Traditional Media towards diverse, and decentralized content creation.

Prof. Murthy took us on a deeper dive into Social Media Platforms and their profound impact on Local and Global Information Ecosystems. He also delved into the intricate relationship between Social Media, Global Identity, and the pervasive influence of "Cancel Culture."

Transitioning to Prof. Borah, the focus sharpened on the key element of our discussion viz. the "Opportunities and Risks" within the Digital Media Revolution. She provided a balanced perspective, using case studies as reference to delve deeper into the complexities of Misinformation and Disinformation. The Decade- Long Migration to Decentralized Media Content and the challenges posed by this shift were illuminated, thereby offering a nuanced understanding of the landscape.



YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCH9XUhiv6Y>

January 2024

## Polarized Rhetoric Driven by Nationalism, Cultural Identities, and Conflicts: Building Bonds through Focused Interventions.



**Dr. Masahiro Yamamoto**  
Associate Professor and Chair, University at Albany



**Dr. JungHwan Yang**  
Assistant Professor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



**Dr. Aditya Vashistha**  
Assistant Professor, Cornell University



**Dr. Zelly Martin**  
Doctoral candidate, School of Journalism and Media, Univ. of Texas at Austin; Graduate Research Assistant, Propaganda Research Lab, Centre for Media Engagement.

The webinar explored the factors contributing to National and Societal Polarization. Prof. Yamamoto initiated the discussion by connecting our theme to the rise of Uncivil Discourse in Political Conversations on Social Media, highlighting how online platforms intensify the impact of Nationalist Rhetoric and recommended interventions to foster Civil Expression. Prof. Yang discussed research on Partisan Media Effects, finding impacts on knowledge but limited effects on Political Attitudes. Prof. Aditya elaborated on the role of AI in countering negative discourse, providing perspective from the Global South, examining propaganda risks for marginalized communities on encrypted apps like WhatsApp.

Ms. Martin provided insights from Global Research, stressing the contextual nature of Disinformation and the importance of Community-Led Solutions. She shared key trends in governmental use of emerging tools for Propaganda Worldwide, exploiting Cultural Divisions. The discussion highlighted that while technology plays a role, solutions still need to understand what really motivates people and encourage local activists more than just technical fixes.



YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j1q9LZvZu8A>

April 2024

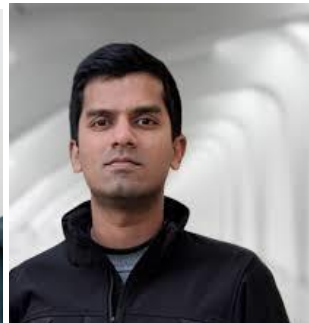
## Promises & Perils of AI: Mitigating Bias, Exploring Opportunities, and Achieving Fairness.



**Dr. Jaideep Srivastava**  
Professor, Director of Undergraduate Studies for Data Science, Department of Computer Science & Engineering, University of Minnesota.



**Dr. Vishal Misra**  
Professor, Department of Computer Science and Electrical Engineering; Vice Dean of Computing and AI in the School of Engineering, Columbia University



**Dr. Sharath Chandra Guntuku**  
Assistant Professor, Computer, and Information Science, School of Engineering and Applied Science, University of Pennsylvania.



**Dr. Nikhil Malik**  
Assistant Professor of Marketing, Marshall School of Business, University of Southern California.

The Centre for Software and IT Management (CSITM) and Mizuho India Japan Study Centre (MIJSC) of IIM Bangalore hosted an insightful panel discussion titled “Promises & Perils of AI: Mitigating Bias, Exploring Opportunities, and Achieving Fairness” on April 30th, 2024. The event featured esteemed experts, including Dr. Jaideep Srivastava from the University of Minnesota, Dr. Vishal Misra from Columbia University, Dr. Sharath Chandra Guntuku from the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Nikhil Malik from the University of Southern California. The discussion explored AI's potential to revolutionize industries and improve quality of life through Data Processing and Automation, while also addressing significant ethical challenges such as Algorithmic Bias, Privacy Concerns, and Job Displacement. Attendees, ranging from academics and industry professionals to policymakers and students, gained valuable insights into leveraging AI's benefits while mitigating its risks, emphasizing the importance of fairness and ethical considerations in AI Development and Application.



YouTube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rh599v-x7Sc>

## Quick Fun Fact

One interesting place in Japan is **Okunoshima**, an Island in the Seto Sea called "Rabbit Island" because of its special Wild Bunny Population. This comes from a big event in the past.

In World War II, Okunoshima was a secret site for making chemical weapons. After the war, the buildings were taken down and the rabbits used for testing got set free or ran off into the wild. With no big predators on the island, the bunny group grew and grew.

Now, Okunoshima pulls in folks from all over who want to see this cool sight for themselves. The island has a neat view and lets you hang out with these chill rabbits. You can feed them and watch them play in a spot that shows how nature can beat tough times with a neat history in the mix.

This tale shows how Nature can take back a once tight space and turn it into a cool place to see and gives a taste of Japan's past and how it lives in tune with wild animals.



## Corporate

### **Mitsubishi Corporation India**

Mr. Taichi Kashima  
Mr. Yuma Miura  
Ms. Simran Suri  
Mr. Ajay Shankar Vargu

Mr. Araki H. Jay - UJA Global Advisory  
Mr. Virendra Nandekar-Founder, Batir Innovations  
Mr. Ryosuke Fujioka- The ASEAN-Japan Economic and Industrial Cooperation Committee (AMEICC)  
Ms. Yuna Natsumi - JETRO  
Mr. S. K. Ramesh – BOSCH

### **NEDO**

Mr. Masafumi Senda  
Mr. Genryu Hattori  
Mr. A.M. Siddiqui  
Mr. Dheeraj Kumar Bharadwaj

### **METI**

Mr. Takuma Otaki  
Mr. Yoshiro Kaku

## Academia

### **Hiroshima University**

Dr. Sushil Raut  
Ms. Mari Higginbotham  
Prof. Shinji Kaneko

Prof. Dhiraj Murthy, University of Texas  
Ms. TANAKA Tamami - Ehle Institute



## Stakeholder Visits

## Government and Public Sector

### **IIDA Group**

Mr. Kenichi Mori  
Mr. Ichiro Hoshino  
Mr. Naoki Shinazaki

### **Osaka Prefectural Government**

Mr. YAMAGUCHI Nobuhiko  
Mr. MAEDA Shinichi  
Mr. KAKIMOTO Hiroyuki  
Ms. SAWADA Miyuki  
Ms. YABE Yoshiko  
Ms. UNO Keiko  
Ms. ZUSA Misaki

### **JAI Initiative**

Mr. Anil Sachdev  
Dr. Tomo Noda

## The Only Manufacturing Unit of Tiranga, India's National Flag!

Here's a flag-tastic fact for you: Nestled in the bustling city of Hubli, Karnataka, the Karnataka Khadi Gramodyoga Samyukta Sangha (KKGSS) is the only authorized unit in India entrusted with making the Indian flag. Picture this: since November 1, 1957, a dedicated team has been waving the flag of patriotism, quite literally!

Imagine the pride of crafting the tricolor! KKGSS has been spinning, weaving, and stitching our national flag with the utmost precision. With around 100 spinners and 100 weavers working their magic, they ensure every flag meets the rigorous standards set by the Bureau of Indian Standards. Any slip-up could lead to serious consequences—think of it as the “no-go” zone for flag blunders!

But that's not all they do! Beyond the flags, they also produce a variety of khadi items like clothes, carpets, bags, caps, bedsheets, and even handmade paper and honey. It's like a khadi paradise!

Their commitment to quality is so strong that they faced a four-year battle before securing the flag-making contract. And, despite the complexity and strict regulations of flag-making, they manage an impressive annual turnover of about Rs 15 million. The stitched flags are sent to the BIS board for approval, ensuring that every flag is as perfect as our nation's pride deserves.

So, next time you see the Indian flag fluttering proudly, remember it might just have been crafted by the skilled hands at KKGSS, right in the heart of Karnataka!



Picture credit: The Karnataka Khadi Gramodyog Samyukta Sangh

## MIJSC TEAM

### CHAIRPERSON:

Prof. Jaideep Sarkar

### CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER:

Saideep Rathnam

### CONTRIBUTORS:

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Prabha Narayana

Shivam Srivastava

Akshay Rao

Neha Joshi

Emmanuel Selva Royan



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