

ASCP Chronicle

OMOTENASHI AND ITS RELEVANCE IN THE CHANGING WORLD - BRINGING FINESSE TO SUPPLY CHAINS WITH OBSERVATIONS AND LEARNINGS FROM JAPAN

ANSHUMAN NEIL BASU
Convenor and Chair,
India Supply Chain 2025 Conference

India is one of the fastest growing economies in the world and has a labour force which is the world's second largest. India's extremely rich heritage and culture, sustainable agricultural and livestock yield, huge export potential and abundant skilled manpower can make it a food capital of the world if it is blended with quality and world-class supply chain process. The purpose of this conference is to identify the learnings from Japan which can be implemented in India which will improve our supply chain systems to world class levels. This will involve several small yet significant behavioral changes in our supply chain systems which will for a good cause and will also make India as destination for investments and create a foundation for the growth engine. We want to bring the everyday process of supply chain within the gambit of simplicity, finesse and excellence.

While we welcome Japan with sophisticated state-of-art technology and a healthy country, but we also know it is resulting from high discipline and the mantra of continuous improvement. The spirit of Japan's customer service, the best in the world, can be brought in the supply chain services in India. *Omotenashi* is a deep-rooted cultural practice focussed on anticipating customer wishes. Bowing down, literally, to your every need and desire, service professionals in Japan are the first thing many foreign visitors notice. It is the spirit of Japan's Customer Service and while India too believes in the hospitality spirit, bringing this culture within the supply chain domain can create unlimited wonders and opportunities.

Behind the success of any developed or developing nation efficient supply-chain management is critical because it increases competitiveness, responsiveness, and thereby customer satisfaction with quality & affordability. This is just not theoretical. If we must excel globally and attract new businesses for making more in India



Anshuman Neil Basu

promote globally our local produces and products, then we need to go steps further to bring customer delight and make it a responsible chain.

Improving the world, improving our community so that consumers demand is fulfilled with delight as well as the planet protected, should now be the only focus. It should be engrained in our day-to-day work systems. Each step of the process or the cycle will have to be carefully, diligently and sympathetically crafted to bring value and excellence. The whole idea is to improve the quality of living till the last person and make this planet a better place each day with each step.

Customer Focus - The spirit of Omotenashi

Christel Takigawa, the French Japanese TV announcer won the bid to Tokyo Olympics with the enunciation of the word *Omo Te Na Shi*. In Japan, there is a deep-rooted culture, which comes from *sado* (tea ceremony), called *Omotenashi*, meaning to wholeheartedly look after guests. The term is a microcosm of the country itself, representing the Japanese mindset of hospitality centring around care rather than expectation. We need to bring this concept in

all supply chain processes by owning this culture.

Most non-Japanese people heard about this term during the successful bid of Japan for Olympics 2020 when this was mentioned. The culture of *omotenashi* is a national asset and success strategy for Japan. Many companies, particularly Departmental Stores use this doctrine daily as a policy to enhance customer experience of going that extra mile towards customer delight. Most importantly about this concept is that this is part of their cultural ethos as the level of commitment required to bring and deliver excellent customer service at every step of action can only come from within which can be trained and explained but cannot be forced upon.

Just as in all actions this incredible sense of hospitality begins at every doorway too. As you enter stores or restaurants, expect to hear the bellowing welcome of *irasshaimase* as you step inside. A polite nod or smile is all you need to offer in return – there is no cultural expectation that this friendly welcome will be reciprocated. “*Omote*” means public face – an image you wish to present to outsiders. “*Nashi*” means nothing. The meaning goes way deeper than just providing outstanding hospitality. *Cont on Pg 03*

ASCP
India's First Association for Supply Chain Professionals

WITH A FOCUS ON JAPAN
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Message for the ASCP 2025 Conference

AMITAVA BAKSI
President, ASCP

It is my proud privilege to welcome you all to the Annual India Supply Chain Conference 2025. The theme for this year will be Supply Chain to Responsible Chain : Trade, Technology, Talent and Sustainability. Our esteemed speakers for the Conference come from various fields including industry and academia to deliberate and share their thoughts on the theme. I also welcome our special guests from Japan who have made effort to come and join this bespoke conference.

The Conference is presented by two powerhouses of the Supply Chain industry from India and Japan as Presenting Partners - Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority, India's largest container port and Yesuda Logistics Company, one of the largest logistics companies in

Japan. To forge the rising level of bilateral ties between India and Japan, Japan Association of Logistics and Transport (JALoT) has also come forward as Supporting Partner for the Conference. We are humbled by the association of our friends from Japan in our Conference. My sincere thanks also goes to all our Sponsors who have supported this Conference to reach new heights this year.

This year, the Annual Responsible Chain Awards 2025 have also seen many entries from large enterprises as well as MSMEs from India and abroad posing a challenge for the Panel of Jury represented by international experts to select the best!

I look forward to the Conference providing a meaningful learning experience to you all who are coming with varied expectations from the Conference. ✨



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Supply Chain to Responsible Chain

Transforming Global Supply Chains
Trade, Technology, Talent & Sustainability

About the Association of Supply Chain Professionals (ASCP)



The first BVDU - ASCP Supply Chain Centre of Excellence and a Logistics Lab inaugurated yesterday by Dr. Tomoyoshi Ogawa, Professor Emeritus Meiji University

ASCP's Annual Conference is one of a kind premier supply chain conference in India and intends to provide delegates with opportunities to network and discuss

The Association of Supply Chain Professionals (ASCP) is India's first home grown not-for-profit association for supply chain & logistics professionals and registered under India's Societies Registration Act, 1860. The Association promotes supply chain & logistics professionals to build up desired levels of expertise and skills in the supply chain system, besides taking up leading policy initiatives and provide a platform for the systematic and sound growth of the profession in India.

ASCP's Annual Conference is one of its kind premier conference (oldest and first international supply chain conference in India) intends to provide national and international delegates with opportunities to network and discuss the management issues and improvement needed in various supply chains.

- The Association provides opportunities for professionals to communicate, develop and improve supply-chain managerial skills and create awareness about innovations and appropriate supply-chain systems for efficient business growth.
- The Association proposes to do this through active stake-holder engagement at the national, regional and state levels as well as through employers and educators across the spectrum.
- The Association focuses on sustainability objectives, aiming and advising to reduce member organisations' carbon footprint, minimise waste, and support eco-friendly practices.
- The Association strives to work towards connecting professionals, educating aspirants, skills development, creating jobs and thus contribute to nation-building.



Anshuman Neil Basu, Secretary General ASCP, made a presentation in June 2025 at the Japan Association for Logistics and Transport (JALoT) in Tokyo Japan.



★
ASCP conducts exclusive and bespoke Industrial Tours for its Members every year

Cont from Pg 01

Omotenashi means service that comes from the bottom of the heart – honest, no hiding, no pretending. Imagine, if this can be brought to enhance customer delight in all aspects of our supply chain.

Today Japan focuses only on 'customer delight', and not just 'customer satisfaction', in its responsible chain, with their spirit of *Omotenashi* in supply chain. You will see *Omotenashi* at every sphere of your travel as soon as you board for Japan. It starts from the airport gate of departure if you are flying any of the Japanese airlines, such as ANA.

Uniqlo, as another example, the popular fashion apparel retailer, which is expanding globally, uses the doctrine to its international stores just as it would to its domestic stores. Uniqlo already has two large iconic stores in Gurgaon and Delhi, running successfully, and plans to expand extensively in India with the same principle and standards that they maintain in Japan, keeping customers need in top priority most often going beyond their expectation, having all their staff trained by Japanese experts and most often in Japan itself to bring them to the same level.

Omotenashi is all about hospitality and politeness and getting undivided attention. The new age taxis in Japan for example will be self-driving but will ensure the effect of *Omotenashi* remains. One will also notice that in Tokyo the taxi drivers are in suit, the tie and the white gloves which are optional, waiting to welcome you and give you the special feeling in every ride. The drivers are not allowed any tattoos and must be well dressed always, and men must be clean shaven, and of course they will never be intoxicated. This is checked every day by the taxi company before they start their long hour duty, which is sometimes of 18 hours. The drivers undergo regular trainings on how and when to speak to passengers, on cleanliness and even on how to open the doors for the customers, and even on how to handle unruly or drunk passengers and even get regular briefings on driving etiquettes like having both the hands on the steering wheel. They even have a tablet to assist with language with foreign passengers. It is just not the attire or the politeness but the entire experience is well thought culture which is allowed any tattoos and must be well dressed always, and men must be clean shaven, and of

course they will never be intoxicated. This is checked every day by the taxi company before they start their long hour duty, which is sometimes of 18 hours. The drivers undergo regular trainings on how and when to speak to passengers, on cleanliness and even on how to open the doors for the customers, and even on how to handle unruly or drunk passengers and even get regular briefings on driving etiquettes like having both the hands on the steering wheel. They even have a tablet to assist with language with foreign passengers. It is just not the attire or the politeness but the entire experience is well thought culture which is part of *Omotenashi*. Japanese people think each other as part of the society and the larger community and take pride in serving their customers. People from other countries are naturally left at awe with such services. Some taxi companies have up to 77 dos and don'ts for drivers.

Today the world is rapidly progressing in technology in every aspect of life. *Omotenashi* is the practice which can give an edge in business and success.

Discipline and Patience

In July 2019 in Tokyo, I held a special 'culinary seminar and workshop' for enthusiasts who are fond of 'Indian cuisine' in which about 20 students from all over Tokyo & suburbs joined. Though a planning session was held about a week before (nothing in Japan is without an advance plan) with the deputy 'chefs' to decide the menu and their ingredients. This initiative of a spicy workshop was a first-of-its-kind, so everyone was super excited! The remarkable thing was just not how everyone joined to help me but also finish dinner and the wrap up everything to handover the way the restaurant was given to us, precisely in 'new' condition, and 'on time' - with each cutlery washed and dry wiped in its place. Everyone worked almost 'automatically' choosing what they would like to do. And absolutely "no-wastage" of any leftovers, which was very fondly taken home by each one to the last imaginable spicy grime! It was a great lesson on discipline and the art of no wastage.

Quality in services and products is paramount for success. Isse Miyake is a globally well-known Japanese designer. In Miyake's eyes, the silhouette of a dress, the facade of a skyscraper and the nose of a shinkansen are viewed in the

same way and can hold the same amount of ingenuity and beauty.

Precision, high-quality and eye for detail is the hallmark of most Japanese manufacturers as a practice, and not with any profit interest. Sometimes the whole objective is to create something different, new and high-quality invention even if it is meant to be of no business projection for that time. The world's thinnest rubber band was invented in Japan by a small company which used to make high precision collar inserts or stays. The President of the company noticed a very thin strand of rubber scrap on the floor one day. He came up with an idea to manufacture rubber bands from that, and not just plain ones but the thinnest and most durable rubber bands. The rubber bands are not only even cut but have a high stretch tensile strength of 700% of its size compared to 300% of other usual good quality rubber bands. During the time when he came up with this product there are hardly any buyer he would have. However, times have changed. The corona pandemic has created a new clothing accessory for the humans – the Mask. The rubber band they manufacture not only is in high demand but very popular now amongst people to make their own quick mask with a tissue paper or a handkerchief instantly. The paper or cloth is folded in two with the rubber band inserted in the fold and simply then stretched to cover the face. The best part, due to its thin size and texture it doesn't even pain the back of the ears even after prolonged use.

In Japan, everything over a minute is considered late. The Tokyo metro never sleeps. Running precisely on time and commuter safety is considered a product. Train drivers are well trained in special schools and then also on simulators by experts to sharpen the reflexive skills and minimize disruptions, and while on duty random checks and inspections are done. The margin error in reaching a station is usually less than a second. The drivers on duty are sometimes even randomly checked to gauge the speed of the train manually, and then checked on the speedometer, which too not so surprisingly expected to come with precise results, and which usually it does. Train tracks are maintained regularly.

Trains can't run on time if the tracks aren't maintained. The President of a large train

company says that 'Running on time is only possible when they combine the soft and hard skills. Running a train safely and on time is its mission.'

In the early 20th century in Japan, it was said that trains were usually always late in running. The expert who is also considered the god of driving and worked for the National Railways in Japan, Mr Koki Yuki brought in the revolution of time keeping and gauging the speed of the trains teaching drivers how to be on time to the second. His method also used the passing sceneries and landmarks and using their instincts to gauge the speed of the train and run on time. This method is still used today. With so many passengers' customers service and hospitality training are a big deal for Tokyo metro. There is an entire building which is dedicated to teaching the art of customer service. The training includes memorizing the names of all the train stations of Tokyo metro, counting the change, checking all the machines which the customers will be using which includes all the vending machines, passenger safety measures in the coaches and in the platforms, to greeting all its thousands of customers with a bow and attending them. Maintenance yard cleans the coaches regularly and the bogies are even taken out of the rails and cleaned like new every three to four months. Every component of the bogie is taken out and inspected and tested, cleaned and polished by hand. Japanese trains are so efficient about time that if trains are late, then the train companies must issue certificates to all the passengers because otherwise their employers won't believe that.

The customer service representative must know and excel in the three things, i.e. hearing, receiving, and seeing off. The customer service attendant should also be passionate about what he or she is doing. Technology is important for both hard and soft skills to deliver the right product with preciseness. India has a great opportunity to become the world's most dynamic big economy and successful for the entire population by using the Japan model. Technology and Customer Delight today is the future of supply chain. ☺

The India Supply Chain Conference, a two-day event until 2023, shifted to a half-day festival-style format in 2024.



Japan Association for Logistics and Transport (JALoT) visited ASCP for discussions and a presentation in April 2025.



Opening of Central Region Chapter in February 2025

Coming up

10:00 - 12:00

B-B Meetings
By prior appointments only



11:30 - 13:00

Distribution of Badges to Conference Delegates

12:30 - 13:50

Mix n' Mingle
Networking Lunch



14:00 - 14:20

National Anthem and Lighting of the Lamp

Welcome Address
ASCPs Annual India Supply Chain 2025 Conference



Anshuman Neil Basu,
Chair & Convenor
of AISC 2025 and
Secretary General,
(ASCP)

14:20 - 14:25

Inaugural Address
Supply Chain to
Responsible Chain

Amitava Baksi,
President,
Association of
Supply Chain
Professionals
(ASCP)



14:25 - 14:35

Theme Address
Transforming Global Supply
Chains – Trade, Technology,
Talent & Sustainability



Vinit Kumar,
Chief Electrical
Engineer Services,
Indian Railways

14:35 - 14:45

Address by Guest of Honour

Dr. Avinash Dhakne,
I.A.S.
Member Secretary,
Maharashtra
Pollution
Control Board



14:45 - 15:00

Address by Chief Guest

Unmesh Sharad Wagh,
Chairman, Jawaharlal
Nehru Port Authority
(JNPA) & Chairman,
Vadhavan Port



15:05 - 15:30

The Annual India Supply Chain
2025 Conference Special Guest
Keynote Address



Hiroyuki Hibino, Executive Officer &
General Manager, Yasuda Logistics
Corporation, Japan

Fumiuyuki Ota, CEO, Zenport, Japan

*'Be strong'
I whispered to
my coffee*



15:30 - 15:45

Tea & Coffee Break



Shiv Hukku,
Former Executive
Vice President Sales
& Operations Planning,
JSW Steel Ltd.

15:50 - 16:10

Greetings from the Japan
Association for Logistics and
Transport (JALoT)

Morihiro Kawata,
Chairman and
Chief Director,
Japan Association
for Logistics and
Transport
(Online Live
from Tokyo,
Japan)



Japan's Logistics and 'The 2024
Problem – Drivers Shortage'
(Why do Japanese Companies
See India as the
Hottest Market?)

Yuji Hashimoto,
Manager, Business
Division, JALoT
(Online Live from
Tokyo, Japan)



16:15 - 16:40

Development in context to Supply
Chain Ethics & Sustainability

**Social Innovation: Ethical Goods
with Empowered Roots**



Srikant Rao, Honorary Vice President,
The National Association for the Blind,
Karnataka

Sneha Bhattacharyya, Research
Manager, Banglanatak dot com and
Contact Base

16:45 - 17:00

Joint Announcements by Bharati
Vidyapeeth University (Deemed),
Members, and ASCP

17:00 - 17:12

Future-Ready Supply Chains:
Integrating Technology, Talent,
Trade & Sustainability

17:15 - 18:15

Futuristic Roundtable:
Navigating Tomorrow's
Opportunities & Disruptions in
India's Next-Gen Supply Chain

MODERATED BY

Amitava Baksi, President
Association of Supply Chain
Professionals (ASCP)



Sirshendu Mukherjee,
Chief Logistics Tata Steel Ltd.

Shekhar Jha, Head Raw Materials,
Aluminium Business, HINDALCO



Anirban Sanyal, Head – Supply Chain
& National Logistics, Century
Plyboards (I) Ltd.

MVS Raju, Chairman and Managing
Director, MVS ACMEI Technologies



Amita Khurana,
Group Chief
Raw Materials
Procurement,
Tata Steel Ltd.

**“
India has a rare
opportunity to
become the world's
most dynamic big
economy and
successful for the
entire population by
using the Japan
model.”**

★
The India Supply Chain
Conference is the first and
oldest international supply
chain conference held in India
since 2007

18:15 - 18:30



Quick Break for Coffee

18:30 - 18:50

Star Session: The 5-Star Japanese Hospitality in Supply Chains

INTRODUCTION BY
Anshuman Neil Basu

ANA'S Omotenashi Journey
Towards a Sustainable Future

Shigeru Ishimoto
General Manager &
Station Manager,
All Nippon Airways
(ANA) Mumbai



18:55 - 19:55



**ASCP's Annual
Responsible
Chain Awards
2025**

for working towards the Sustainable Development Goals. ASCP supports the Sustainable Development Goals

19:55 - 20:10

Synopsis and Way Forward
**Supply Chain to Responsible
Chain - India's Next-Gen
Supply Chain**

Dinesh Shastri
Managing Director, TM International
Logistics Ltd and Immediate Past
Chairman of ASCP's Eastern India



20:15 - 22:30

Supply Chain Happy Hours
Food-For-Thought Networking!

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Chain with Our Bar's
Finest Cocktails!*

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**newspapers aren't
dead yet?** Isn't it?

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us and take it home with you

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Unlocking the Elite Edge: ASCP Membership Benefits

Join ASCP today and immerse yourself in India's premier supply chain network, where innovation and influence converge.

If supply chain defines your world, this is the indispensable forum you can't afford to miss.

As a premier network for forward-thinking leaders, ASCP isn't just a community; it's your strategic accelerator for navigating India's dynamic supply chain ecosystem.

ASCP matters! In a hyper-connected era, isolation is obsolescence. ASCP's ecosystem amplifies your influence, turning serendipitous encounters into multimillion-rupee synergies.

Global-local fusion: Bridge Indian ingenuity with international best practices, preparing you for the ASEAN-India trade boom and beyond.

In essence, ASCP membership isn't an expense—it's an investment yielding exponential returns in resilience, relevance, and revenue. If supply chain is your arena, why settle for the sidelines when you can orchestrate the game?

Please consult with any distinguished member of our management committee to obtain particulars regarding membership.

Signing off for the year 2025, thank you for joining us and see you in 2026!

Dr.T.A.S.Vijayaraghavan
Senior Vice President, ASCP



As we gather at this Annual Supply Chain Conference of the Association of Supply Chain Professionals (ASCP), we stand at the crossroads of a transformative era in supply chain management. The shift from conventional supply chains to responsible chains is no longer optional but imperative - driven by the urgent need to integrate sustainability, advanced technology, skilled talent, and ethical trade practices.

Today's global challenges demand that we rethink how goods move, how innovations like AI, Machine Learning, Augmented Reality, Block

Chains, IoT etc. enhance transparency and resilience, and how we nurture talent capable of leading this change. This conference offers a unique platform to exchange cutting-edge ideas, foster collaboration across industries, and commit to actionable strategies that balance economic growth with environmental leadership and social responsibility. Together, we can build supply chains that are not only efficient and resilient but also regenerative and equitable - ensuring long-term value for businesses, communities, and the planet.

I encourage every participant to engage deeply, challenge assumptions, and

leave inspired to drive meaningful change in their organisations and beyond. Let us embrace this opportunity to shape the future of supply chains into responsible chains that truly reflect the values and needs of our interconnected world. ✨

This conference offers a platform to exchange cutting-edge ideas, foster collaboration across industries, and commit to actionable strategies that balance economic growth with environmental leadership and social responsibility.

ASCP is the first not-for-profit professional association in India (registered under Societies Registration Act 1860) exclusively for supply chain and logistics professionals.

**EVERY
SUPPLY CHAIN
PROFESSIONAL'S
COMPANION IN
THIS EVER
CHANGING
WORLD**



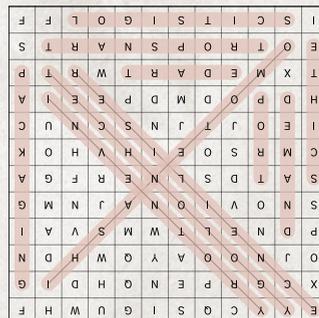
INDIA SUPPLY CHAIN
CONFERENCE

2026

WORDSEARCH SUPPLY CHAIN

Can you find the words connected in one way or the other with the theme indicated by the title in today's Word Search? *The words may be read horizontally, vertically or diagonally either forwards or backwards, but always in straight lines. Mark them as you find them.*

Resilience, Omotenashi, Technology, Packaging, Logistics, Transport, Inventory, Demand, Ethics, Trade, Port



E	Y	Y	C	Q	S	I	G	U	W	H	F			
X	C	G	R	P	E	N	Q	H	D	I	G			
O	J	N	O	O	A	Y	Q	W	H	D	N			
P	D	N	E	L	T	W	M	S	V	A	I			
S	N	O	V	I	O	N	A	J	N	M	G			
S	A	T	D	S	L	N	E	R	F	G	A			
C	M	R	S	O	E	I	H	V	H	O	K			
I	E	O	J	T	J	N	S	C	N	U	C			
H	D	P	O	D	M	D	P	E	E	I	A			
T	X	M	E	D	A	R	T	W	R	T	P			
E	O	T	R	O	P	S	N	A	R	T	S			
I	S	C	I	T	S	I	G	O	L	F	F			



Japan Association for Logistics and Transport (JALoT) is the exclusive 'Supporting Partner' of ASCPs Annual India Supply Chain 2025 Conference. This is the first time JALoT is a partner to any overseas conference anywhere in the world, which adds to enormous honor & pride for ASCP in India.