

# Qatar national day

## Qatar-Japan ties continue to strengthen

Yousef Mohamed Bilal  
AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF QATAR

Dec. 18 marks the National Day of the State of Qatar. I am honored to take advantage of this auspicious occasion to express, on behalf of the government and people of the State of Qatar, my deepest reverence and warmest greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko and members of the Imperial family. As this year also marks the 20th anniversary of the enthronement of the Emperor, I would like to convey my heartfelt congratulations. I also wish to extend my sincerest greetings and best wishes to



the government and friendly people of Japan.

The Qatari people ardently celebrate this glorious occasion every year with the feelings of great pride for what has been achieved in the country's development within a short period of time under the wise leadership of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the emir. Qatar has secured notable advances in terms of economic, human and social developments and the government continues to implement important initiatives that will propel Qatar to become a fully developed and most vibrant nation in the region.

After nearly two decades of persistent and untiring efforts to produce and develop our reserves of natural gas, Qatar has become one of the leading

countries in the gas industry and the No. 1 exporter and transporter of gas in the world, with production capacity that will exceed over 77 million tons of liquefied natural gas (LNG) by 2010.

The impacts of the world financial crisis on Qatar's economy and its development plans are limited because of the strong foundation of our economy as well as the necessary and effective measures being undertaken by the government. In-



Emir of Qatar H.H. Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani

ternational financial institutions predict that Qatar's economy will grow by 9 percent this year and 16 percent next year.

Qatar-Japan relations continue to gain strength in a

steadfast pace and the two sides are determined to advance these ties to a far-reaching and multidimensional partnership. The official visit to Japan by H.H. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, the heir apparent of the State of Qatar in May this year, gave a fresh impetus to our bilateral ties and provided a platform for reaffirming friendship and exploring new avenues for cooperation. It is our sincere wish that such high-level exchanges between our countries will continue in the coming years to further deepen and diversify our relations for mutual benefit.

Japan remains one of our major trade partners; it has been importing Qatari LNG for nearly 13 years under long-term contracts and as of today, 1,186 cargoes were successfully delivered to Japanese buyers. In 2008, Qatar secured about 10.7 percent of Japan's oil needs and 11.8 per-



Modern skyline: Doha, the capital of the State of Qatar

cent of its LNG needs.

Our ties have strengthened over the years and are expanding to encompass non-energy sectors such as education, aviation and technology transfer. A Japanese school was opened in Doha last May and this ushers in more active cooperation in the future. In the field of aviation, Qatar Air-

ways will launch direct flights to Narita International Airport outside Tokyo next year, this in addition to the existing daily flights to Kansai International Airport in Osaka. These accomplishments will contribute to invigorating people-to-people interactions and bolstering the business and trade activities between our

countries. In closing, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to The Japan Times for giving me this opportunity to address its distinguished readers on this happy occasion and I would like to express my best wishes for all to have a happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

### Friendship, prosperity bring mutual benefit

Fumio Kawaguchi  
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-QATAR FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION

On behalf of the Japan-Qatar Friendship Association (JQFA), I want to offer my sincere congratulations to His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, emir of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, the heir apparent, and the people of Qatar on their 38th National Day.



The year 2009 was economically very gloomy owing to the influence of the global financial crisis since last year, but for Qatar and Japan, it was a year that left a large footprint from the standpoint of deepening our friendship.

In April, The Third Asian Ministerial Energy Roundtable Meeting was held, bringing together major resource-producing countries and resource-consuming countries of Asia and the Middle East. At the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Energy and Industry H.E. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah

acted as cochair with then Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Toshihiro Nikai.

Also in April, the Japan School of Doha, which had been closed since 2001, was reopened. Deputy Prime Minister H.E. Abdullah Bin Hamad Al-Attiyah, Minister of Education and Higher Education H.E. Saad Bin Ibrahim Al-Mahmoud, Minister of State for Energy and Industry Affairs H.E. Dr. Mohamed Bin Saleh Al-Sada and other Qatari dignitaries kindly attended its opening ceremony May 14. We earnestly hope that this school will become a new symbol of our mutual friendship and create harmony between the cultures of our people.

And it was the highlight of this year that His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani visited Japan on an official working visit in May. The heir apparent had active interchanges with top Japanese in various fields during his three-day stay, including an Imperial Audience with His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and His Majesty the Prince, a meeting with the prime minister and other dignitaries, and attending the welcome

reception that the JQFA cosponsored with the Qatar Embassy.

I am convinced that this visit of the heir apparent, upon whom future Qatari development rests, is an event of great significance for the perpetual development of friendship between Qatar and Japan.

This November, H.E. Yousef Mohamed Bilal assumed the ambassadorship of the State of Qatar to Japan as the successor to H.E. Reyad Ali Al-Ansari, who made great efforts in promoting mutual friendship for nine years.

Next spring, Qatar Airways will start operating flights between Doha and Narita and 2012 will mark the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between our countries.

On behalf of JQFA, I would like to promise to strive to deepen the mutual friendship and contribute to strengthening and developing bilateral ties through close cooperation with the Qatar Embassy. I sincerely hope that Qatar will continue its prosperity and development under the superior leadership of the emir and our mutual relationship will continue to develop.

### Facts and figures about the dynamic country in the Gulf

Qatar is located in the southern Persian Gulf surrounded by Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates and Iran. Qatar's area is 11,437 sq. km, projecting

northward about 160 km into the Gulf.

In December 2008, the Qatar Statistics Authority announced the results of the new census. According to its survey, Qatar's

population reached 1,552,820, increasing by 108.7 percent from the 2004 census of 744,029. As per the 2008 survey, 50.2 percent of the total population resided in Doha.



Dhow cruising: Traditional ships in Doha Bay

#### Foreign Relations

Qatar is a member of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), whose other members are Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Qatar is a member of the United Nations and is also a member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and other international organizations, including the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Trade Organization.

Qatar is emerging as one of the most dynamic economies in the Middle East. It has the highest per capita income in the world and enjoys one of the fastest-growing gross domestic product rates, reaching 13.3 percent real GDP, and valued in 2008 at over \$80 billion. According to a World Economic Forum 2008-2009 report, the country is now the most competitive Arab economy, ranking 26th worldwide.

The economy is rapidly expanding in practically every sector and industry. A combination of government investment and the participation of multinational companies is creating a culture of opportunity.

The government is using its vast oil and gas wealth to create a society that provides opportunities for all. It has committed over \$140 billion for investment, infrastructure and expansion in a wide range of sectors, including energy, health, education, transport, infrastructure and tourism.

Reliance on crude oil exports has been replaced by an ambitious and progressive approach to the management of the nation's economy, which focuses on developing Qatar's huge natural gas reserves and its expansion of liquefied natural gas, petrochemical and condensate production. This is supported by a far-reaching program of economic liberalization and diversification into a more broadly based economy.

Qatar is quickly becoming the world's single largest producer of LNG and by 2010 will have a production capacity of

77 million tons per year. In 2006, Qatar overtook Malaysia as the world's largest exporter of LNG. In addition, gas-to-liquids (GTL) exports began in 2007; liquid petroleum gas (LPG) exports are increasing and Qatar aims to become one of the top five petrochemical producers in the world by 2012. New oil capacity also continues to come onstream, thus boosting export volumes. By 2012, Qatar will be producing the equivalent of 6 million barrels of oil.

**Qatar and Education**  
On the education front, Qatar is devoted to developing itself toward a knowledge-based society to enrich the level of its human capital and improve its long-term competitive advantage.

This year, Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development held the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) in November in Doha. WISE is a global, groundbreaking, collaborative initiative established by the non-profit Qatar Foundation under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikh Moza Bint Nasser Al Missned. WISE seeks to monitor and contribute to 21st century challenges and their impact on education. WISE is a unique global event whose ambition is to create a new international multidisciplinary platform to shape education models for the 21st century. During this summit, opinion leaders and decision makers from around the world came together with education experts and shared their visions through open and insightful discussions.

As the idea of WISE shows, the country is transforming into an oasis of knowledge and education with the establishment of the Qatar Foundation to train local talents in order to meet the challenges of an ever-changing world. The foundation's flagship project Education City, on the western edge of Doha, hosts branch campuses of some of world's leading universities and research institutions, crowning Qatar with the title of the Gulf

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Night lights: A stunning view of Doha

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and H.H. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani  
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On the occasion of  
Qatar National Day, 18 December

We extend our heartfelt congratulations  
and greetings to

**Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohammed Bin Thani**  
Who set up the pillars of the Modern State of Qatar

His Highness  
**Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani**  
The Emir of the State of Qatar

His Highness  
**Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani**  
The Heir Apparent

And to all the honourable people of Qatar  
We hope for more returns of this memorable occasion  
and wish that Qatar always enjoys security, welfare  
and prosperity under the wise leadership of  
**His Highness The Emir**

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# Qatar national day/world

## Profile of Qatar

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capital of education. The Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar, established in 1997, was the first branch campus in Education City, followed by Weill Cornell Medical College (2002), Texas A&M University (2003), Carnegie Mellon University (2004), Georgetown University School of Foreign Service (2005) and Northwestern University (2008).

### Sports

Sports are part of Qatar's rich culture and heritage. Qatar aims to build a reputation in sports through its world-class facilities and cutting-edge academy ASPIRE, which provides training for future world-champion athletes.

With \$2.8 billion investment in sporting infrastructure, Qatar successfully hosted the 15th Asian Games in 2006. Today, Qatar has nine major multipurpose sports venues and more than 15 additional specialized sports venues. According to a global contest organized by the International Association for Sports and Leisure Facilities, ASPIRE Dome and Khalifa Stadium in Doha are ranked as the second- and third-best sports facilities in the world. Therefore, Qatar has confirmed its readiness to bid to be the host of the Summer Olympic Games in 2020, the biggest multisports event in the world.

Furthermore, Qatar is bidding to become a host nation of the 2022 World Cup in soccer (www.qatar2022bid.com). If Qatar is granted such an honor, the state will be the first nation in the Middle East to show the region's passion for soccer to the world. With state-of-art facilities and having excellent knowhow for hosting international sports events in the past, Qatar waits to offer once-in-a-lifetime soccer experiences for fans from around the globe.

### Museum of Islamic Art

Last year, the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) opened in Doha. Due to the integrity of traditional design principles that use indigenous materials and contemporary technologies that have created familiar, functional and environmentally suitable architecture, MIA was awarded "Overall Project of the Year" at the Second Annual Middle East Architect Awards.

Furthermore, the Museum of Islamic Art Education Center opened in October this year to demonstrate the vision and commitment of the State of Qatar to the international cultural and museum sector. The facilities of the center include a library that contains 10,000



**World Cup: The Qatar bidding committee's logo for the 2022 soccer tournament**

titles of Islamic art, classrooms, workshops and a computer lab. Thus, the center is designed to provide a platform to art scholars from around the world to exchange ideas about their research subjects. The other objective of the center is to educate members of the community by involving them in interesting activities pertaining to Islamic art.

### Tourism

The vision of a new Qatar goes beyond energy developments. The government of the State of Qatar earmarked \$17 billion for tourism for the next 5 years. Initiatives are being undertaken to stimulate the construction of new high-class hotels, resorts, condominiums, restaurants, museums and leisure facilities at unprecedented levels. The number of passengers using Doha International Airport has increased from 2 million to 10 million over the past 10 years. To respond to increasing passengers, the New Doha International Airport (NDIA), the first of its kind to be designed for accommodating Airbus A380 aircraft, will handle 50 million passengers per year when construction is completed by 2015. NDIA will transform Qatar into a leading aviation center in the region.

### Bilateral relations

The Qatar-Japan bilateral relationship is being enhanced on the foundation of mutual cooperation and common interests. Qatar is a trustworthy supplier of oil and natural gas to Japan. In 2008, Japan bought 54 percent of Qatar's total oil exports and 21.4 percent of its total LNG exports, thus making Qatar the one of biggest energy suppliers to Japan. Qatar is also benefiting

from Japanese investment in various projects and the contribution of Japanese experts in Qatari industries. This year, Japanese direct investment in Qatar totaled \$550 million. Currently, there are more than 30 Japanese companies operating in Qatar that focus on the construction, shipping and energy sectors.

Economic relations between the countries continue to be strong. Japan has been the No. 1 trade partner for Qatar over the past few years. Last year, Qatar's highest value of exports and its third-highest value of imports were transacted with Japan. Trade relations also grew in scale with the value of trade, leaping from \$7.6 billion in 2004 to \$28.2 billion in 2008.

This year, the State of Qatar and Japan have made significant progress in developing bilateral relations through various opportunities. For instance, His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, heir apparent of the State of Qatar, made an official working visit to Japan in May this year. His Highness had an imperial audience with His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, held talks with then Prime Minister Taro Aso and many other high-ranking officials of the government of Japan and further strengthened solid Qatar-Japan bilateral ties.

Meanwhile in Doha, a Japanese school opened last May thanks to the initiatives by the leaders of the State of Qatar and Japan. During official visit to Qatar in May 2007, then Prime Minister Shinzo Abe showed his commitment as the leader of the Japanese government initiative by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani, the emir of the State of Qatar, who had requested Japan for cooperation to establish a Japanese school where Qatari students receive Japanese-style education since His Highness visited Japan in 1999. Another reason for opening the Japanese school in Doha is to respond to the increasing number of Japanese citizens in Qatar. It is expected that Qatari and Japanese students who learn in this



**Olympic hopeful: Qatar's ASPIRE Zone boasts some of the world's finest sports venues.**

school will gain a better understanding of the people in our countries.

In addition, next year will open a new page for Qatar and Japan. Qatar Airways is

scheduled to start direct flights between Doha and Narita International Airport from March 2010 as a result of talks between civil aviation authorities of the two countries.

tries in August 2008. As a five-star awarded airline, Qatar Airways continues to pursue excellence in customer service and promote the country's image.



**Sight to see: The Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, designed by I.M. Pei, opened in 2008.**

**Our Warmest Congratulations to  
His Highness The Emir,  
Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani**

**Chiyoda is proud to be a part of the success and prosperity  
of Qatar under the wise leadership of His Highness The Emir.**



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**Japan-Qatar Friendship Association**

*Chairman: Fumio Kawaguchi*

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