

Oman national day

Celebrating 40 years of good ties

Oman-Japan relations continue to grow, strengthen

Khalid Al-Muslahi
AMBASSADOR OF THE SULTANATE OF OMAN

On the memorable occasion of the 42nd anniversary of the National Day of the Sultanate of Oman, I have the honor, on behalf of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said, his government, and the people of Oman, to convey the greetings and best wishes of good health,



success, peace and prosperity to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and to the members of the Imperial family, as well as the government and the friendly people of Japan.

Diplomatic relations

2012 is an important year for Oman and Japan as it marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. Historically, the contacts between Omanis and Japanese go as far back as to 1619 when the first Japanese visited Oman.

However, the first official government mission from Japan visited Muscat in 1880. The historical relations between Oman and Japan were founded on mutual respect, and since the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 1972 they have been developed with reciprocal trust and friendship, and the interaction and cooperation between the two countries have since been growing rapidly on various levels, not only economically, but also politically and culturally.

The Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Tokyo held a grand ceremony on Feb. 27 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the official establishment of the diplomatic relations between Oman and Japan, and launched the "Oman-Japan 2012" program of events and activities. More than 150 dignitaries from the political, diplomatic, business, academic and media circles attended the memorable occasion for praising the strong relations between Japan and Oman, and wishing the governments and people of the two countries to further promote the relations.

Starting with the launching ceremony, various events have been held by both countries to commemorate the 40th anniversary throughout this year to further strengthen their relations.

On May 7, Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado inaugurated Alia Al Farsi's "Communique Celestial" art exhibition



His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said

at the embassy in Tokyo, which was attended by former Prime Minister H.E. Yasuo Fukuda and a number of former ministers and vice ministers, ambassadors,

Diet members, high-profile government officials, art museum directors, and presidents of major corporations and universities. Al Farsi's 40 mixed-media pieces revealed a contextual collection that showcased Oman's artistic development. This was the first art exhibition hosted by the embassy for an Omani artist and received excellent reviews as a one-of-a-kind exhibition by a local artist.

The special exhibition "Desert to Mantle: Exploring Oman's Geology" was held by the Geological Museum, National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST) from April 17 to July 1 in cooperation with the Omani Embassy. The special exhibition on Oman's geology provided a unique opportunity to see some exclusive geological samples and photographs reflecting Oman's rich geological diversity and geological history, spanning more than 800 million years, that had fascinated researchers

Helping both nations deepen the relationship

Shinzo Abe
HONORARY CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-OMAN SOCIETY;
PRESIDENT, LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, FORMER
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

I wish to express my heartfelt congratulations to H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said for the glorious anniversary of the National Day of the Sultanate of Oman.

Japan and Oman are linked with each other by the seas, through the Malacca Strait, the Indian Ocean and the Arabian Sea. Our country relies for much of its energy resources on the Arab Gulf states. Oman is an extremely valuable state for Japan accounting to a geopolitically key strategic position for sea traffic of the Strait of Hormuz.

H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said, so sagacious, has achieved a modern nation footing with extraordinary speed. Today, relying not only on petroleum, he endeavors to manage the sustainable development of the economy while



focusing his efforts on the advancement of education for the people and social welfare development, grappling with nation-building in respecting history and culture, state management of an Arab model. My deep respect and esteem go to H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said for prescience, discernment and superb leadership.

I recognize that it is our mission as a country holding the common history of having flourished as a seafaring nation to make more efforts not to be limited to only economic cooperation, but to actively deepen friendship exchanges and to demonstrate multi-layered cooperative activities in a variety of fields, including nurturing talented people, education and academics, culture and sports activities. And I am confident that structuring and promoting friendly and trustworthy relationships with the Sultanate of Oman will surely lead to the peace and prosperity of the Arab Gulf region.

In closing, my prayer is for the continued sound health of H.M. Sultan Qaboos bin Said and the further development and prosperity of the Sultanate of Oman.



Sports: Oman celebrates the annual Royal Equestrian and Camel Festival, which includes six rounds of Arabian horse races, in January at Al Adiyat Horse Race Track. OMANI EMBASSY



Modern venue: Inaugurated in October 2011, the Royal Opera House Muscat is the leading arts and culture organization in the Sultanate of Oman. OMANI EMBASSY



Spectacular: Dhofar in the south of Oman is a popular tourist destination in the summer for its cool climate, lush green landscapes, stunning waterfalls and beaches. OMANI EMBASSY

and geologists from around the world. Also, a symposium on Oman's geology and geo-tourism was held following the opening ceremony and the reception on April 22. The exhibition and the symposium encouraged Japanese people to visit Oman and explore its characteristic natural beauty and rich and diverse culture.

On Oct. 16, a Special Grand Lecture Meeting was held at Meiji University, organized by the Japan-Oman Society in cooperation with the embassy and the Meiji Institute for Global Affairs. President of the Liberal

Democratic Party and Honorary Chairman of the Japan-Oman Society H.E. Shinzo Abe addressed the forum, and distinguished Omani and Japanese speakers gave a series of enlightening lectures and speeches covering various aspects of the Oman-Japan relations.

From Oct. 4 to 11 the Embassy held the "Al Adyat" Omani Arab horses photo exhibition by the renowned Japanese photographer and journalist Yoshiko Sato, exhibiting 20 unique works from her collections of photographs taken at the Royal Stables in

Oman.

Moreover, the embassy has also hosted thus far 27 lectures, seminars and cultural events under the Discover Oman program designed to introduce Oman to various segments of society as part of the 40th anniversary celebrations. More than 1,200 participants attended these regular events and the program is set to continue until the end of 2012.

A special ceremony, attended by a number of prominent Japanese officials and intellectuals, was also held by the embassy on June 28 to launch the book "Oman: A Country of Wonders, an Oasis in the Turbulent Middle East," written by H.E. Seiji Morimoto, former ambassador of Japan to Oman. The book brings Ambassador Morimoto's enlightened perspective of the unique and dazzling nature Oman boasts and in confirmation of the strong ties between Oman and Japan.

The two countries also exchanged congratulatory messages between the foreign ministers on May 7, shared a commemorative logo for this happy anniversary, and issued commemorative postal stamps in both Oman and Japan.

Furthermore, a unique commemorative publication is set to be published by the end of this year in recognition of this very special anniversary and to

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to the People of
the Sultanate of Oman
on the Occasion of
the 42nd Anniversary of
Their National Day



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Science: A ribbon-cutting ceremony for the exhibition "Desert to Mantle: Exploring Oman's Geology" at the Geological Museum, National Institute of Advanced Industrial Science and Technology (AIST), is held April 22, with Omani Ambassador Khalid Al-Muslahi (center), AIST Vice President Eikichi Tsukada (left) and AIST Senior Vice President Shingo Ichimura. OMANI EMBASSY

Expanding trade, investment, cultural exchanges

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commemorate the economic, political and cultural partnerships between the two nations.

Relations set to expand

The cooperation between Oman and Japan has been growing steadily on many levels, particularly in trade, investment and culture.

Japan is one of the most important markets for our oil and natural gas exports. Oman is also the third biggest market for Japanese exports in the Middle East and North Africa region.

Oman is ranked 33rd among Japan's top trading partners, and the bilateral trade between the two countries reached over \$8 billion in 2011, an increase of 4.3 percent from the total amount of bilateral trade of 2010.

In 2011, Oman was the ninth largest crude oil supplier to Japan, which imported 28.60 million barrels of the Omani crude, accounting for 2.2 percent of its crude oil imports. Oman was also the eighth largest LNG supplier to Japan. Oman's exports of LNG to Japan reached 3.86 million metric tons in 2011, an increase of 35 percent from 2010.

Beyond the economic realm, relations between Oman and Japan have witnessed throughout the years the exchange of high-ranking official visits, from members of our royal families, senior government officials, members of parliament, business and academic leaders, in addition to growing exchanges and cooperation in the fields of culture, tourism, education, youth, sports affairs, defense and security.

In 2010 Oman and Japan officially inaugurated The Sultan Qaboos bin Said Chair of Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Tokyo. Being the first of its kind at this prestigious university, this indefinite chair is part of Oman's highest mission to play a constructive role in the dialogue among civilizations and the promotion of cultural exchanges, and the development of enduring ties of friendship and collaboration among nations for world harmony and peace.

In closing, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and sincere thanks and gratitude to the people of Japan for their kindness and hospitality that they have extended to me

and my family since our arrival in this great and beautiful country. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey Oman's appreciation to the government and people of Japan for the kind cooperation extended to us for many years, and our profound appreciation to all the members of the Japan-Oman Parliamentary Friendship Leagues, the Japan-Oman Society, the Hiroshima-Oman Friendship Association, the Japan-Oman Club, and the Japan-Arab Association.

I would also like to thank The Japan Times for giving me the opportunity to write about the Sultanate of Oman and the friendship between Oman and Japan, and to express my embassy's warm greetings and appreciation to our many friends in Japan for their marvellous support and assistance in promoting the good relations between our two friendly peoples. I am also indebted to our sponsors, whose generosity has made this supplement possible.

I am confident that our relations in the coming days will see the further enhancement of close bonds of friendship between Oman and Japan.

Logo reflects sense of 'unity,' 'future aspirations'

The Oman-Japan 40th Anniversary logo was designed by Sawako Kani, winner of the logo design contest. The logo reflects a sense of "unity" and "future aspirations" between the Sultanate of Oman and Japan, inspired by their two unique national flowers blooming together from the same root in a wind-rippled magnificent desert under a peaceful blue sky.

The "Sultan Qaboos Rose" is named after His Majesty the Sultan in recognition of his role in bringing progress and peace to his people and symbolizes, in addition to beauty and passion, courage and power and expresses respect and appreciation. Meanwhile, the "sakura" flower, the national flower of Japan, signifies spring's arrival, the inauguration of a new beginning and its exuberance bestows hope and good fortune.

The wind-rippled desert reflects the vast expanses of the Arabic heritage and boundless hospitality, and reflects the endowed hydrocarbon resources that became an important factor in the two countries' strategic relations. By encompassing the two glorious flowers, under the peaceful blue skies of the Arabian desert, the logo indeed expresses the two countries' "individuality" and sense of "unity" over their 40 years of relations depicted by four flowers that represent four decades of a harmonious relationship. The flowers stem from the same root, representing the further reinforcement of the close bonds of friendship and cooperation between the Sultanate of Oman and Japan.



Exchanges: A Special Grand Lecture Meeting is held at Meiji University in Tokyo on Oct. 16 on the occasion of 40 years of Japan-Oman relations. Alia Al Farsi's "Communique Celestial" art exhibition (right) opens May 7 at the Omani Embassy in Tokyo with special guests attending. OMANI EMBASSY



Special year: The logo for the 40th anniversary of Oman-Japan diplomatic ties. Omani Ambassador Khalid Al-Muslahi (left photo, fourth from right) presents gifts of appreciation to Japanese politicians and dignitaries at the ceremony launching the "Oman-Japan 2012" program to celebrate the anniversary year on Feb. 27 at the embassy in Tokyo. OMANI EMBASSY



Reliable LNG source for the world

Sultanate of Oman supplies Japan with eco-friendly energy

The increasing popularity of liquefied natural gas as a choice of fuel has led to a greater push for increased production in order to meet growing world demand.

Buoyed by, but not exclusively, the need to preserve the environment and reduce the adverse effects of global warming — which has led to dire situations such as drought and scorching heat in some parts of the world as well as excessive rainfall and flooding in other areas — interest in LNG and the technology for its production is spreading widely.

The anticipated boom in shale gas also promises to add to the volumes of natural gas available to the world offering some replacement to coal, oil and also now nuclear sources of energy, which is increasingly being second-guessed.

For over a decade now, the Sultanate of Oman has proven to be one of the world's most reliable sources of liquefied natural gas, supplying key markets in Asia and the Pacific Rim regions, specifically Japan, South Korea and parts of Europe.

The Oman LNG and Qalhat LNG companies have the capacity to produce a combined 10 metric tons per annum of LNG (10 MTPA).

Oman LNG was established by Royal Decree in February 1994 and began operations in 2000 after the construction of the company's first train. A second train was soon added to the plant, based in Qalhat, Sur.

The outstanding success of Oman LNG's two-train plant soon led the government of Oman to establish a third LNG train, which is owned by Qalhat LNG but operated by Oman LNG, and taps into the synergy of the same production site, gas supplier and similar majority shareholding.

Together, these two entities, have enabled the production of a reliable supply of LNG from Oman to the world, adding volumes of liquefied natural gas needed to preserve the world's



Resource: The Qalhat LNG Terminal, a liquefied natural gas plant, is situated near Sur, the easternmost major town in Oman. OMAN LNG, QALHAT LNG

natural environment while at the same time growing the economies of countries where this valuable energy source is used for generating electricity, power to boost production for industries and at homes for heating and cooking. Natural gas is also now being increasingly applied to transportation and its use in this sector is expected to grow.

Now in its 12th year of operation, Oman LNG and Qalhat LNG have earned a stellar reputation as key contributors to the sultanate's economy and development acting as an effective catalyst for diversification. The enterprises are the largest

private company investor in corporate social responsibility (CSR) through a vigorous social investment program (SIP).

Oman LNG and Qalhat LNG have received a number of major recognitions from both the government and the private sector for its support of environment-friendly initiatives, a forward-looking staff training that equips and prepares its largely Omani staff to take up challenging roles in the LNG industry and its exhaustive, well-targeted CSR program in Oman.

Both companies also continue to strive to outperform the industry's achievement in terms

of Health Safety and the Environment (HSE). Qalhat LNG for instance clocked up a world-class HSE record of 20 million man-hours without a Lost Time Injury (LTI) during the construction of its train, and only recently, Oman LNG achieved a 5 million man-hours without LTI.

With the government of Oman's focus on tapping the country's gas reserves and effectively harnessing their contribution to national growth and development for the benefit of its people, the reliable supply of LNG from Oman will continue to play its role in supporting the world's economy and people.

FELICITATIONS TO
**HIS MAJESTY
SULTAN QABOOS BIN SAID**
AND THE PEOPLE OF OMAN
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
42nd NATIONAL DAY

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