

Thailand national day

Building toward comprehensive strategic partnership

Thanatip Upatising
AMBASSADOR OF THAILAND

Today, on Dec. 5 every year, Thais from all walks of life once again gather to honor His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who has been a unifying force and source of inspiration for our country. The love and reverence that Thais feel toward our king is genuine. It comes from appreciation for the constant concern His Majesty has shown and the tireless contributions he has made to the welfare of his people.

For more than six decades, His Majesty King Bhumibol has devoted his time and effort in working for the well-being of his subjects, in keeping with his oath of accession to "reign with righteousness, for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people."

At a time when much of Thailand's rural areas remained underdeveloped, he set out to travel to all parts of the country, disregarding his comfort, to meet his people, learn about their way of life and study the problems they faced. He would then come up with practical solutions and implement various initiatives to solve them. This has since grown into over 4,000 projects initiated by His Majesty, ranging from hill tribe crop substitution to irrigation and natural disaster relief.

His Majesty has also made a great impression far beyond his kingdom. Royal visits he made early in his reign as Thailand's head of state, together with Her Majesty Queen Sirikit, left memories that continue to be cherished by their hosts and helped enhance Thailand's profile in the eyes of the international community. His work has earned him recognition far and wide, not least by the United Nations, which in 2006, presented him



His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand

with the first Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award. His initiatives, such as those in rural development, and his inventions, such as a rain-making technique, have also benefited other countries. Thailand's foreign relations, therefore, owe much to His Majesty for his invaluable contributions to strengthening the close ties of friendship and cooperation Thai-

land enjoys with other countries. This includes our relations with Japan.

His Majesty King Bhumibol paid a state visit to Japan in 1963 while the Crown Prince of Japan and his Royal Consort visited Thailand in 1964, and later Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko paid a state visit to Thailand in 1991, and also joined the 60th anniversary

of His Majesty King Bhumibol's accession to the throne in 2006. The relationship between the Imperial family and the royal family of Thailand is one of the closest among the royal families in the world. Thais are especially honored that HRH Princess Chulabhorn was received in audience by Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo on Nov. 21 this year.

This year, Thailand and Japan mark the 126th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. We have witnessed more engagement between our two leaders. In January, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paid an official visit to Thailand as part of his overseas trip upon assuming the premiership. It has reaffirmed the importance of Thailand as Japan's strategic partner in Southeast Asia, and in key areas of economic, security and people exchanges. Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra officially visited Japan twice last year and this year visited Japan to attend the 19th Nikkei Conference on the Future of Asia in May. These visits are a testament to the importance of Japan to Thailand.

Due to Thailand's strong economic fundamentals, strategic location at the heart of ASEAN, proven resilience and most importantly, enduring friendship with Japan, I am confident that we can further expand our cooperation at all levels. With the determination of both sides, this relationship will develop and prosper into "a comprehensive strategic partnership" based on mutual trust and understanding in the not too distant future.

As diplomatic representative of His Majesty King Bhumibol, I am fully committed to doing my best to further strengthen our long-standing cordial relations, and to enhance our cooperation in all fields for the benefit of our two peoples and countries, and above all else, in honor of the beloved "Father of the Kingdom of Thailand."



Royal splendor: The Grand Palace sparkles against the backdrop of a sunset in Bangkok. ROYAL THAI EMBASSY

Wide-ranging ties draw nations ever closer

Teisuke Kitayama
PRESIDENT, THE JAPAN-THAILAND
ASSOCIATION; CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-
THAILAND BUSINESS FORUM

On the auspicious occasion of the 86th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to His Majesty, and I wish the king, the royal family and the Thai people even better health, happiness and prosperity.

The Thai economy in 2013

is in a lull after recovery and reconstruction demands from devastating floods in 2012, which pushed up growth, and also with the termination of government-supported measures to promote automobile purchase. However, with upcoming large-scale government projects leading the way in 2014, such as development of transport infrastructure and flood-control measures, I would like to expect that the Thai economy will return to the growth path.

With ASEAN playing a crucial role in global supply chains, Thailand enjoys the geographical and economic advantages of being at the hub of the ASEAN

market, attracting foreign investors. In recent years, the number of Japanese companies entering Thailand remains high. The Japanese Chamber of Commerce, Bangkok, has more than 1,500 member companies registered as of September this year, and as for last year, the increase in the membership was the second largest recorded since 1989.

Speaking of human exchange between the two countries, Thailand received 19.67 million foreign visitors between January and September this year, among those Japan came in fourth, with 1.15 million tourists. During the same period, among the 7.73 million foreign tourists who visited Japan, 290,000 visitors came from Thailand, which has already surpassed the previous year's figure. Although Thailand came in sixth, the number of visitors showed the biggest increase among major countries, with growth of 60 percent over last year. I hope that more and more Thai people will visit Japan to get to know the country better, and to have friendly feelings toward Japan.

It goes without saying that Japan and Thailand have long enjoyed a close relationship in

exchanges between the Imperial household and the royal family, as well as exchanges in government, economic and cultural spheres. This year, we celebrate the 40th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. Thailand is one of the founding members of ASEAN, and Japan and Thailand play a core role in the regional organization.

I sincerely hope that the two countries will continue to enhance a wide range of exchanges, not only as business partners as evidenced in being the biggest investor, but also in terms of social and cultural exchanges, such as visiting and learning about each other's cultures. The Japan-Thailand Association and The Japan-Thailand Business Forum would also like to make humble contributions in this regard.

In closing, on the auspicious occasion of the 86th birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, I would like to reiterate my sincere hope for the relationship of mutual trust between Japan and Thailand to become even more enduring in light of our two countries' years of close and amicable relations.

On the auspicious occasion of
the Anniversary of His Majesty's Birthday,
we humbly offer our respectful felicitations
and abiding loyalty to
**HIS MAJESTY KING
BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ.**

ブミポン アドゥンヤデート国王陛下の
お誕生日に際して、
敬意を表し、
心からのお祝いを申し上げます。

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On the Auspicious Occasion
of the 86th Birthday of His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of the Kingdom of Thailand

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On the Auspicious Occasion
of the 86th Birthday of His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of the Kingdom of Thailand

Japan-Thailand Business Forum (JTBF)
Chairman: **Teisuke Kitayama**
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King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand
on the Occasion of His Birthday**

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Thailand national day



Tourist paradise: Located between Phuket and the western Strait of Malacca coast of the mainland, the Phi Phi Islands feature beaches and clear water. ROYAL THAI EMBASSY

Thailand a key base for regional economic cooperation in Asia



Kobayashi Itoh
Eizo Kobayashi and Ichiro Itoh
CO-CHAIRMEN OF JAPAN-THAILAND
TRADE AND ECONOMIC COMMITTEE,
KEIDANREN

On behalf of the Japan-Thailand Trade and Economic Committee of Keidanren, we humbly offer our most sincere congratulations to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej on his 86th birthday.

The Japanese business community has a keen interest in economic relations between Japan and Thailand, particularly since Thailand is an important base for Japanese companies'

efforts to expand business in the ASEAN region. Japan continues to be the largest foreign investor in Thailand, investing a healthy 201.4 billion baht in 496 projects between January and October this year. The formation of an ASEAN Economic Community by the end of 2015 and further development in the Mekong region are expected to boost Thailand's role as a business base in ASEAN.

We believe that this will provide opportunities for the Japanese business community to join with Thailand in contributing to creating an Asia-Oceania economic zone. In particular, we hope that construction and upgrading of infrastructure in the Mekong region will incorporate nonfounding members of ASEAN into the regional value chain and further reinforce Thailand's role as a hub for the region. We are confident that this will increase the potential for Thailand and



Nightscape: An area of Bangkok along the Chao Phraya River ROYAL THAI EMBASSY

Japan to collaborate in new projects in the region.

The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

(RCEP) negotiations began in May this year, and we hope the collaboration between Japan and Thailand will be further developed to achieve a high degree of liberalization and swift conclusion of the agreement. Next week's ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit provides a crucial opportunity to encourage such cooperation.

On the bilateral front, Japan and Thailand should collaborate further on planning infrastructure projects for comprehensive flood control and enhancing flood insurance.

To address the above issues and promote further private-sector cooperation between our two countries, both within Thailand and in the wider ASEAN region, Keidanren would like to hold, together with the Thai business community, the 23rd Japan-Thailand Joint Trade and Economic Committee meeting.

We hope that the coming year will forge even closer bonds between Japan and Thailand. Allow us to close with our very best wishes for His Majesty on the occasion of his birthday.

**Royal Greetings to His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand
on the Occasion of His Birthday**

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*Royal Greetings to His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand
on the Occasion of His Birthday*



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**We Send Our
Heartiest Congratulations to
His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of the Kingdom of Thailand
on the Auspicious Occasion
of His 86th Birthday**



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