

Qatar National Day Special

Swift growth toward peace and stability

HASSAN MOHAMMED RAFEI AL-EMADI
AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF QATAR



Today marks the National Day of the State of Qatar. The people of Qatar celebrate this glorious occasion to commemorate the founding of Qatar on Dec. 18, 1878, by founder, father and ruler Sheikh Jassim Bin Mohammed Al Thani, who led the country toward unity, independence and laid the foundations of modern Qatar.

The national day of Qatar is an opportunity to reflect and pay homage to our heroes and founders, who have sacrificed and borne the challenges and difficulties for the unity of our country, and provide a chance for embodiment of the unity and cohesion between our wise leadership and the citizens.

This great, historic day highlights the identity and rich history of our country and symbolizes the ideals and hopes on which Qatar was built, and promotes the

loyalty, solidarity, unity and pride in our national identity.

I am honored and privileged to take advantage of this auspicious occasion to express, on behalf of the government and people of Qatar, my deepest reverence and warmest greetings to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, and members of the Imperial family. I also would like to make use of this opportunity to extend my sincerest greetings and best wishes to Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, the government and friendly people of Japan.

On this day of each year, the Qatari people renew their commitment, loyalty and belonging to our country, and assess the achievements made in the process of the comprehensive renaissance witnessed by Qatar under the wise leadership and vision of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani (may Allah protect him).

National Vision 2030

In the implementation of our National Vision 2030, the government continues to develop infrastructure, promote economic diversification, develop the pri-



His Highness the Emir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe shake hands at their summit meeting in Tokyo in February 2015. EMBASSY OF QATAR

vate sector and prudently manage the natural resources while preserving and protecting the environment and continuing to promote human development through a comprehensive and integrated health care system.

The vision also aims at social development by taking into account justice, providing security and safety for all citizens and residents, and working on cultural enrichment and sports excellence.

Despite the conditions of the unjust blockade imposed on Qatar, the immunity of our economy from the external shocks has been strengthened. The World Bank expects Qatar's economic growth rate to reach 2.8 percent in 2018 and to rise to around 3 percent in the following years.

Our dependence on ourselves has grown, ties with our allies have become more established and our relations with most of the world have developed.

As economic diversification efforts

continue smoothly, the government gives the oil and gas sector, the source of our basic wealth, a special importance. Significant developments have taken place in this sector, by which Qatar will maintain its position as the world's largest liquefied natural gas exporter for many years to come. Our oil exports have not been affected by the embargo. Qatar has been keen to implement all its commitments under existing contracts and has concluded several long-term contracts with a number of countries during the embargo.

Diplomacy

On the diplomacy front, Qatar is keen to uphold the principles of respect for the sovereignty of states and the pursuit of good, neighborly policy and continues to be an active actor and supporter of all efforts to resolve differences, confront the challenges and dangers that surround the Arab and Islamic nations and



Doha, with the number of skyscrapers rising in recent years, has rapidly developed into one of the most modern cities in the Persian Gulf region. EMBASSY OF QATAR

deal effectively with issues and problems that threaten international peace and security.

The bilateral relations between Qatar and Japan are traditionally strong, friendly and are steadily developing. The economic cooperation is the backbone of these relations, as Japan is one of Qatar's most important strategic partners in the field of energy. These relations continue to diversify and expand at a rapid pace to include the areas of nonenergy in efforts to transform them into a mutually beneficial strategic partnership.

The cooperation and coordination between the two countries have been strengthened through regular bilateral mechanisms at the economic, political, security and defense levels. Since 2006, we have been holding annual ministerial meetings of the Joint Economic Committee to discuss energy, trade, investment and other important sectors. The 12th meeting took place in October in Tokyo.

The two countries also hold high-level security and political dialogues on a regular basis to discuss bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest at the regional and international levels.

I am committed to working harder with our friends in Japan to strengthening the existing friendly relations and to achieve the desire, the political will and aspirations of leadership in both countries for promoting a future-oriented and comprehensive strategic partnership.

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 very happy, peaceful and prosperous New Year.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



Doha's colorful skyline can be seen through the arches of the Museum of Islamic Art, located on an island off the city. EMBASSY OF QATAR

On the occasion of Qatar National Day
Our Warmest Congratulations to

**His Highness
Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani,
Emir of the State of Qatar**

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



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Japan Liaison Office

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Japan-Qatar Friendship Association

Chairman: Toshio Mita

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on National Day



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Qatar National Day Special

Warm, mutual support deepens ties

TOSHIO MITA
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN-QATAR
FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION



On behalf of the Japan-Qatar Friendship Association (JQFA), I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to the Emir of the State of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-

Thani, and the people of the State of Qatar on their 47th National Day.

The JQFA was established in 1976 with the aim of deepening friendship and goodwill between Qatar and Japan, as well as promoting economic cooperation and cultural exchanges. The association is currently active with 44 corporate members, and the position of honorary chairman of the association has been assumed by successive ambassadors of the State of Qatar to Japan. This year, the ambassador was replaced for the first time in about nine years.

Looking back at events over the past nine years during the tenure of His Excellency Yousef Mohamed Bilal as the former ambassador of the State of Qatar to Japan and the former honorary chairman of the JQFA, I shall never forget the foundation of the Qatar Friendship Fund thanks to a donation of \$100 million from Qatar after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and the financial assistance that was provided from the fund for a number of reconstruction support projects in the disaster areas.

In August, I visited one of those projects called MASKAR, a fish processing facility built in the town of Onagawa, Miyagi Prefecture. I was strongly impressed that the progress toward reconstruction had steadily progressed centering on MASKAR. In addition, I recognized that the warm support, both materially and spiritually, from the people of Qatar is engraved deeply on the hearts of the people in the disaster area. Thereafter, I resolutely made it a goal to widely spread these memories to future generations.

Based on the relationship that has been built so far between our two nations, I believe that both Japan and Qatar will be

able to build deeper cooperative relationships as irreplaceable partners by deepening exchanges not only in the energy field, but also in the fields of education, culture, medicine, sports and others.

In particular, Qatar has moved to implement a plan for a large-scale increase in the production of liquefied natural gas. The country has also steadily constructed the stadiums, as well as the necessary infrastructure, to hold the 2022 FIFA World Cup. Therefore, Qatar has a potential to make a big leap forward in the future.

Welcoming His Excellency Hassan Mohammed Rafei Al-Emadi, the new ambassador to Japan, as the new honorary chairman of the JQFA, our association is willing to work closely with the Embassy of the State of Qatar in Japan and work hard to enhance further cooperation and make contributions toward Qatar's bright future.

In conclusion, I extend my most sincere congratulations for Qatar's continued prosperity and development under the great leadership of H.H. Sheikh Tamim, and hope that our relationship of mutual trust will continue to develop further.



Top: Aerial view of The Pearl, an artificial island in Doha.
Above: The Museum of Islamic Art in Doha houses a collection of works spanning 1,400 years. EMBASSY OF QATAR



Top to bottom: Pigeon towers at the Katara Cultural Village in Doha; boarding a traditional dhow is a great way to see the city; Souq Waqif is a traditional market in Doha. EMBASSY OF QATAR

Congratulations

to His Highness Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani
the Emir of the State of Qatar on National Day



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