

Jamaica Independence Day Special

Long-standing relations reflected in a celebration of friendship and partnership

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AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA



On this 57th anniversary of the Independence of Jamaica, it is an honor to extend my warmest greetings, on behalf of Prime Minister Andrew Holness, as well as the gov-

ernment and people of Jamaica, to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, the imperial family, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and the government and people of Japan.

On Aug. 6, 1962, Jamaica became the first member of the English-speaking Caribbean community to gain fully independent political status. In the nearly six decades since that auspicious moment, Jamaica has maintained and developed its parliamentary system in such a manner as to be considered among the most stable of democracies in the Western hemisphere. This reflects the strong and unwavering commitment of the Jamaican government and people to freedom of speech, markets



Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness

and movement. In this regard, Jamaica is ranked first in the Western hemisphere and sixth in the world for freedom of the press, has a healthy and vibrant market economy and entrepreneurial class and, while containing a population of 2.8 million persons, enjoys the support of a widely scattered diaspora of over 2 million nationals. In this vein, many hundreds of those reside right here in Japan.

The Jamaican diaspora, represented by the thousands across Asia, Australasia and Africa and by the millions across the

Americas and Europe, is a prime actor in the promulgation of Jamaican culture across the globe. Primary among Jamaica's cultural signifiers is its reggae music, which has proven to be so impactful that UNESCO has recently added reggae to its Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This UNESCO designation underscores, too, the increasing popularity of Jamaican culture around the world. Even here in Japan, the expanding number of Jamaica and reggae festivals have assisted in exposing Jamaican music, dance and cuisine to greater numbers of people in cities throughout this marvelous country. This is not a new phenomenon, but it reinforces the resonance of the relationship that Jamaica and Japan have long enjoyed. In fact, March 2019 marked the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Jamaica and Japan.

During these many years of friendship, both countries have enjoyed mutually beneficial interconnections across a wide range of agendas including trade, investment, technical cooperation, social development, cultural and administrative exchange programs and collaboration in multilateral fora. Of particular prominence is the Agreement in Principle on Tax Convention between Japan and Jamaica. This agreement, which will be the first ever to be signed between Japan and a Caribbean island, reaffirms our shared commitment in making it easier for Japanese companies to not only invest in Jamaica but also guarantee the elimination of double taxation on their profits, and reciprocally for Jamaican companies investing in Japan.

As Jamaica currently exports 70 percent of its Blue Mountain Coffee and 100 percent of its Sea Island cotton to Japan, the foregoing will, undoubtedly, serve to deepen our commercial cooperation

and further enhance the enabling environment for our respective business communities. I am also pleased to note that a large Japanese company is one of two large private investors in the Jamaica Public Service, which is the largest provider of electricity in Jamaica. Jamaica also receives support from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and provides to Japan English teachers under the JET Programme.

As Japan looks ahead with palpable

anticipation to the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, Jamaica prays for the outstanding success of our Japanese friends through organization of the event and through competition. Through athletic performance and partnership, Jamaica intends to help our Japanese friends to make the games a truly memorable occasion. In this spirit and in the midst of Jamaica's celebration of 57 years of independence, I take this unique opportunity to thank

the government and people of Japan for the steadfast support that has been extended to the government and people of Jamaica over more than five decades of Jamaican political self-determination. Jamaica looks forward to the continuous enhancement of the strong bonds of friendship, which we respectfully share with Japan.

May God continue to bless Jamaica and Japan while guiding our heartfelt relations.



The Blue Mountains are renowned for the high-quality coffee beans produced there. THE JAMAICA TOURISM BOARD

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

Congratulations to the Government and People of Jamaica on the 57th Anniversary of Their Independence

Association of Japanese Importers of Jamaican Coffee

Ataka Trading Co., Ltd.
Kanematsu Corporation
MC Agri Alliance Ltd.
UCC Ueshima Coffee Co., Ltd.
Wataru & Co., Ltd.
Yutaka Trading Co., Ltd.
<http://www.bluemountain.gr.jp>

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Marubeni

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