

Albania Flag Day Special

Relations continue to grow through cooperative initiatives, tourism

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AMBASSADOR OF ALBANIA



On behalf of the Albanian government, I would like to wish the noble and friendly people of Japan a happy Reiwa Era. I avail myself on this occasion to convey Albanians heartfelt greetings to His

Majesty Emperor Naruhito.

For Albanians, November is a very important month, and undoubtedly the country's most historic day is that of independence. On Nov. 28, 1912, Albania's patriots and brave individuals proclaimed Albania's independence from the Ottoman Empire. This also marked the founding of the Albanian state, which was later recognized by all of the great powers throughout Europe and beyond.

Nov. 28 was not a detached act, but a process that continued from war to diplomatic efforts to secure the independence of one of the oldest countries in Europe.

The act of Nov. 28, 1912, sanctioned the

undeniable historical rights of the Albanian nation to be united, free and independent in its territories, along with the other people of the Balkan Peninsula. It was a right emanating from a people with their own language, culture, individuality and history; a right gained through innumerable hardships and sacrifices in the trenches of war, and a right that we Albanians have deserved for our contribution in liberating the Balkans from Ottoman rulers.

Nov. 29, 1944, is known as the day of the liberation of Albania from Nazi fascists. This day coincides with the last battle against Nazism, which was won by Albania's National Liberation Army throughout the country.

The anti-fascist National Liberation War ranked Albania among the victorious countries.

Today, Albania is a NATO member and aspires to be a part of the European Union, while being a full member of many international organizations. For Albania, the road to joining the EU is already irreversible.

Albania will be the chair of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe in January next year.

Albania is one of the fastest-growing economies in Europe, where tourism is becoming the main facet of the economy. In 2018, Albania was visited by around 5.9 million people, mainly from Europe. The number of Japanese tourists has also increased; compared to 2016, the number has doubled.

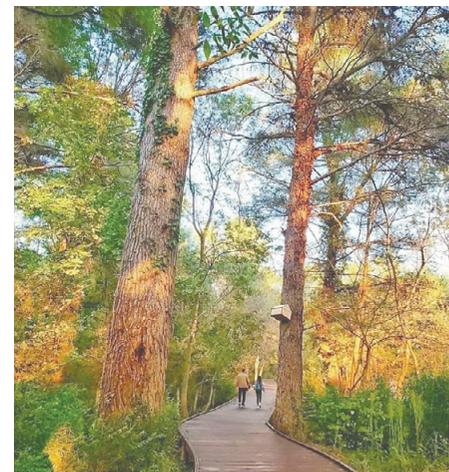
The relationship between Albania and Japan has never been better. We share the same principles on democracy, rule of law, human rights, a free market economy and so on. We support Japan's peaceful policies and efforts for stability and prosperity not only in the region, but all over the world.

The Albanian government appreciates Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's initiative on the Western Balkans, which focuses on reconciliation and cooperation in the region. We fully support the prime minister's initiative on the Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative.

Albanians are very grateful for the enormous support that Japan has given during this year of transition from a centralized economy toward a market economy. We hope to soon see Japanese companies investing in Albania, where the business environment is positive and the legislation is friendly.

A special thanks to The Japan Times for giving us the opportunity to communicate with its readers.

In conclusion, on behalf of the government on the occasion of Albania's Independence Day and 75 years of liberation, I would like to express my best wishes to the Albanian community living in Japan and directly contribute to strengthening the friendship between Albania and Japan.



Divjaka-Karavasta National Park is known for flora and birds. NATIONAL AGENCY OF TOURISM



Saranda, a coastal town that borders the blue waters of the Mediterranean sea NATIONAL AGENCY OF TOURISM

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

Congratulations to the People of the Republic of Albania on the Occasion of The Flag Day

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