

Bahrain National Day Special

Bilateral ties continue to grow and flourish

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AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF
BAHRAIN



Today, fireworks will light up the sky as the Kingdom of Bahrain celebrates its 51st National Day. The Dec. 16 celebrations include a number of cultural shows and festivities across the nation. However, this

year is special as Bahrain and Japan also celebrate their golden jubilee, marking the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations. This remarkable milestone gives us the opportunity to honor the past, celebrate the present and look toward a brighter future.

The two countries established diplomatic relations on May 2, 1972, however, our relations actually date back to 1934. In fact, Japan was the first country in the world to receive



H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa

an oil shipment from Bahrain. That historic shipment on July 9 was the first international oil shipment to be exported by a Gulf nation. This relationship continued to thrive, particularly in oil-related industries, where, in 1980 we saw the first shipment of liqui-

fied petroleum gas shipped from Bahrain to Japan on the Japanese tanker Yuyo Maru.

The ties between Bahrain and Japan have continued to prosper in various fields, including the manufacturing, trade and financial services sectors and more recently in direct investments. In December 2021, the Bahrain Economic Development Board signed a memorandum of understanding with the Japan External Trade Organization in Dubai, and in June, the Agreement between Japan and Bahrain for the Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investment was signed. These two agreements highlight the strong relations fostered by the two nations and further boosts partnerships and cooperation in various economic sectors.

Bahrain began its economic diversification decades ago and its strategic location at the heart of the Gulf with unrivaled market access to the Gulf Cooperation Council's \$1.6 trillion market, coupled with the best-value operating costs in the region, a highly skilled bilingual local workforce as well as 100%

foreign ownership in most business sectors, are just some of the competitive advantages the Kingdom of Bahrain has to offer international companies looking to expand into the region.

Additionally, Bahrain has more recently embarked on an Economic Recovery Plan to drive economic growth based on five main pillars that include simplifying and increasing the efficiency of commercial procedures that will further enhance Bahrain's business-friendly environment, as well as creating new investment opportunities by launching major strategic projects worth a total of \$30 billion.

Japan's current foreign direct investment in Bahrain is already among the top 10 by stock and flows, and further partnerships and investments will contribute to the growth of this ranking. As we continue on our diversification journey, we hope to develop a new chapter of our long-standing relations with Japan by seeing more Japanese companies benefit



The Gateway of Bahrain marks the entrance to Manama Souq.
BAHRAIN NEWS AGENCY

from these vast opportunities.

We are very confident that our relations, for years to come, will see further deepening of the strong ties between the Kingdom of Bahrain and Japan. As we move into the next 50 years of our bilateral relationship, we would also like to take this opportunity to invite our Japanese friends to visit Bahrain and experience its scenic beauty, rich and diverse culture, and hospitality.

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



Bahrain Fort has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 2005.

BAHRAIN TOURISM AND EXHIBITION AUTHORITY



A traditional dhow boat passes the Manama skyline.
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