

Georgia Independence Day Special

High hopes for expanding economic cooperation

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AMBASSADOR OF GEORGIA



On May 26, we Georgians will celebrate the 106th anniversary of the restoration of our statehood. In 1918 we declared independence and established the First Democratic Republic of Georgia.

Our nation chose a path of peaceful and democratic development to create a free country, with free people, respecting the rule of law, democracy and human rights. Unfortunately, the first republic ceased to exist as a result of the Soviet occupation in 1921, until we regained our freedom in 1991.

It must be underlined that Japan was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Georgia both during the first republic as well as in 1992. Japan has always been a loyal friend and valuable

partner to our nation, supporting Georgians in the hardest times throughout our journey to building democratic institutions and a sustainable economy.

According to prominent international rankings, Georgia is one of the safest countries in the world, with one of the most liberal and flexible tax systems, an exceptionally positive investment climate and a business-friendly government. Situated in a geopolitically important area, we form a natural crossroads of globally important trading routes, pipelines and transnational infrastructure projects. As a result, Georgia has become an economic, trade and logistics hub that boasts free trade regimes with almost all the important stakeholders around, including the European Union, Turkey and China, among others.

At the same time, we are proud of our unique culture, history, traditions, amazing cuisine and the oldest winemaking traditions in the world. Yes, we are the homeland of wine. The first wine was made in this region about 8,000 years ago. Both Japanese food and Georgian wine form a great

combination, and both were registered as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Properties in 2013. In fact, Tokyoites will have an opportunity to enjoy Georgian cuisine and wine at the Georgian festival scheduled from June 15 to 16 at Yoyogi park.

On May 24, we celebrated the appointment of Georgia's first honorary consul in Japan, Yoshihisa Mori, who will further facilitate our bilateral relations within Kagoshima Prefecture. In recent years, Japan and Georgia have signed a bilateral investment treaty, an agreement for the avoidance of double taxation and a memorandum of cooperation on establishing a joint crediting mechanism. As a result, we are seeing increased interest from Japanese companies in doing business in Georgia, especially in the energy, hospitality and manufacturing spheres.

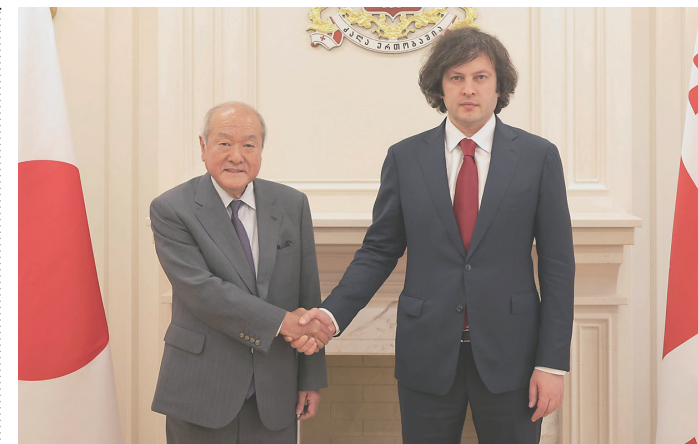
It is noteworthy that Georgia, due to its abundant water resources, has one of the cleanest energy systems in the world, with 85% of our electricity coming from renewable sources. Further increasing this ratio is a strategic priority of the government. In addition, Georgia is commencing with a

transnational submarine cable project in the Black Sea that will connect our country with Romania. The cable is expected to boost our electricity export figures, contribute to stronger connectivity with the European Union and establish Georgia as an exporter of renewable energy.

Despite the far-reaching challenges the global economy has been experiencing, Georgia demonstrated unprecedentedly high economic growth, which proved our worth as a stable and trustworthy investment destination. Georgia's growth did not pass unnoticed by Japan's private sector. Hence, we have high expectations about deepening our bilateral economic ties.

I would like to once again express our gratitude to our friends in Japan for their important contribution to our development, for engaging in extremely positive political, economic and cultural relationships, and for supporting our sovereignty and territorial integrity. I am absolutely sure our excellent relationship will become even more close and cordial in the years to come.

Gaumarjos (cheers)!



Japanese Finance Minister Shunichi Suzuki poses with Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze during the 57th annual Asian Development Bank meeting in Tbilisi on May 4.

EMBASSY OF GEORGIA

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 Georgia
on their Independence Day



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