

Philippines National Day Special

Relationship continues to grow stronger, more dynamic

FERDINAND R. MARCOS JR.
PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES



As we commemorate the 127th anniversary of Philippine independence, I extend my warmest greetings to our Japanese friends and partners on behalf of the Filipino people, including the nearly 340,000 compatriots who proudly call Japan their second home.

June 12 serves as an annual invitation for us to honor the courage and sacrifices of our ancestors who secured our independence, and to reaffirm our commitment to the ideals of democracy, sovereignty and peace.

This year's celebration holds added significance as we approach the 70th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Japan in 2026. As we reflect on our own path to independence, we also recognize Japan as a steadfast partner that has shared in our hardships and triumphs, and continues to help shape the progress we enjoy today and strive for in the years ahead.

Over the past year, our partnership with Japan has become stronger, more expansive and increasingly dynamic. We have seen significant progress in key initiatives, including the Philippines-Japan Reciprocal Access Agreement and our trilateral cooperation with the United States.

In April, I had the honor of welcoming Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba to the Philippines, in a visit that we regard as emblematic of the "golden age" of our bilateral ties. Prior to this, I also received Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya and Defense Minister Gen Nakatani, further underscoring our shared commitment to strengthening defense cooperation and promoting regional security toward our common



Above: The famed resort island of Boracay is known for its white sand beaches and cultural festivals. PHILIPPINES DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

objective of realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Japan remains one of our most important economic partners, with our collaboration spanning infrastructure development, agriculture, disaster resilience, energy security and more. In March, Manila hosted the 15th Philippines-Japan High Level Joint Committee Meeting on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation where we recommitted to our shared vision for inclusive and sustainable growth.

Cultural exchanges and people-to-people ties have also flourished. In the past year, Filipinos ranked among the top foreign visitors to Japan. The Filipino community in Japan continues to contribute to Japanese society while preserving and sharing the richness of Philippine culture.

In the aftermath of several typhoons that struck the Philippines in late 2024, Japan extended assistance, just as the Philippines did in support of those affected by the Noto Peninsula Earthquake in Ishikawa Prefecture in January 2024. These acts of compassion highlight the deep solidarity between our nations.

With a young, talented and dynamic population, the Philippines is steadily laying the foundations of a future defined by innovation, inclusivity and sustainable growth.

Our economy has shown resilience in the face of global challenges. We remain committed to our development goals, one of which is the attainment of upper middle-income country status. Through national efforts and the support of our

international partners, including Japan, this is an aspiration that is becoming increasingly within reach.

Our future holds significant promise, but realizing it will require sustained effort and collaboration. From green infrastructure and renewable energy to artificial intelligence and digital innovation, the Philippines and Japan are positioned to contribute meaningfully to a more sustainable and inclusive world.

However, unlocking this potential demands long-term investment in human capital, particularly in youth and education. Equipping the next generation with the skills to navigate an increasingly digitalized and complex global landscape must go hand in hand with fostering critical thinking, empathy and a strong sense



Above: Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba meets with President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. during an April 29 summit in the Philippines. Left: The Twin Lagoon on Coron Island is a popular site for water sports in archipelagic Palawan province. CABINET PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE; PHILIPPINES DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

of shared responsibility.

We also look forward to deepening our engagement as the Osaka Expo gains momentum. I warmly invite everyone to visit the Philippines Pavilion, which embodies the spirit and creativity of the Filipino people and celebrates the partnership between the Philippines and Japan.

On this Philippine Independence Day, I thank the government and people of Japan for their enduring friendship, and the Fili-

pino community for proudly representing our values and heritage. May this occasion honor our past and inspire a future of shared prosperity, peace and mutual respect.

Mabuhay! (Long live!)

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

Congratulations

To the Republic of
the Philippines
on the Anniversary of
its Independence



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Congratulations
to the People
of
the Republic
of the Philippines
on the Occasion
of
Their National Day



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Top: Goshen Resort is a Romanesque development in Tarlac. Bottom: Dating from the Spanish era, the village of Calle Crisologo, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, offers a glimpse into the past of Ilocos Sur province. PHILIPPINES DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

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Philippines National Day Special



The Philippine Pavilion at Expo 2025. PHILIPPINES TOURISM PROMOTIONS BOARD

Partnership a proud ‘pillar of strength’

MYLENE J. GARCIA-ALBANO
AMBASSADOR OF THE PHILIPPINES



I extend warm greetings to the readers of The Japan Times as we mark the 127th anniversary of Philippine Independence. Every year on June 12, Filipinos around the world honor the enduring spirit, resilience, and sacrifices of our forebears who fought for the freedoms we now enjoy.

This solemn occasion is not only a reflection of our nation's long and courageous journey toward self-determination, but also a renewed call to uphold the values of democracy, unity and peace that continue to guide and inspire the Filipino people. These values form the bedrock of our enduring friendship and strategic partnership with Japan. Over the past 69 years, our bilateral cooperation has flourished across vital areas. Japan remains one of the Philippines' leading sources of trade and investment, a key contributor to infrastructure and development and a trusted partner in maritime security and disaster resilience. Our shared commitment to peace, prosperity and regional stability has made this partnership a pillar of strength in the Indo-Pacific. As someone who hails from Mindanao, I have witnessed firsthand Japan's unwavering commitment to peace and development in the region. For decades, Japan has been supporting the peace process in the Bangsamoro region, rebuilding conflict-affected communities and promoting inclusive growth through infrastructure, education and livelihood programs. These contributions have brought hope and opportunity to many, and they reflect Japan's genuine desire to uplift lives and engender long-term stability in one of the most dynamic regions in the Philippines. Indeed, we are privileged to witness what may be described as a golden age in Philippines-Japan relations. The visit of

Prime Minister Shigeru Ishiba to Manila in April and his fruitful meeting with President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. reaffirmed the shared resolve of our two nations to elevate bilateral ties to greater heights. Anchored in strategic alignment and mutual trust, our countries' partnership is evolving to meet the complex challenges of our time, while fostering sustainable development and regional peace. The Philippines is proud to stand alongside Japan in addressing pressing global challenges. Whether advancing climate action and sustainability, advocating for nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament, or championing a rules-based multilateral trading system, Japan continues to play a critical role in shaping a more peaceful, secure and equitable world. Our trilateral cooperation with the United States further enhances our collective resolve to forge a stronger, more resilient Indo-Pacific. Our vibrant cultural and people-to-people ties further enrich our bilateral relationship and cultivate deeper mutual understanding. From academic and youth exchanges to artistic collaborations and tourism, these interactions breathe life into our shared vision. At the heart of this connection are the nearly 340,000 Filipinos who live and work in Japan. They serve as cultural ambassadors who embody the warmth, resilience and dedication that define the Filipino spirit. Through their daily contributions in diverse fields such as health care, educa-

tion, technology and the arts, they enrich Japanese society and help strengthen the bridge between our two cultures. Their stories of hard work, perseverance and compassion are a source of pride for the Philippines and a testament to the enduring bond between our peoples. This year, we are proud to showcase the Philippines at the Osaka Expo. The Philippines Pavilion offers a window into our nation's vibrant culture and dynamic potential. It is also a bold statement of our readiness to engage the world, and an open invitation to discover the many opportunities the Philippines has to offer. As Philippine ambassador to Japan, I am deeply honored to be a steward of the strategic partnership between our countries. This role calls for constant engagement, and I am grateful to partners in the Japanese government, business community, society and the Filipino diaspora whose collaboration and goodwill continue to inspire and sustain our shared efforts. As we commemorate the Filipino nation's independence, we also celebrate the friendship between the Philippines and Japan — one that has risen from a history marked by both adversity and reconciliation and flourished through mutual respect, meaningful cooperation and shared aspirations for peace and progress. To the bonds we have nurtured and to the brighter future we continue to shape together — *Mabuhay!* (Long live!)



Filipino Foreign Affairs Secretary Enrique Manalo speaks during the Nikkei Forum at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo on May 30.
EMBASSY OF THE PHILIPPINES

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on the Anniversary of
the Independence of
the Republic of the Philippines**

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