

Jamaica Independence Day Special

Strong engagement built on decades of ties

SHORNA-KAY RICHARDS
AMBASSADOR OF JAMAICA



Aug. 6 marks Jamaica's 63rd anniversary of independence and today we celebrate this milestone under the theme "Be Proud. Be Bold. In the Black, Green and Gold."

This theme reminds us of the deeper meaning of the colors of our national flag. As we respectfully lowered the British Union Jack at midnight on Aug. 6, 1962, we proudly hoisted the black, green and gold flag as the symbol of our nationhood — black depicting the strength and creativity of the people; gold representing the natural beauty of the sunlight and the wealth of the country; and green signifying hope and agricultural resources. With that flag we also raised our hopes and expectations for the future.

More than six decades later, Jamaica is making significant strides to achieve economic independence and sustainable development while building resilience to face myriad challenges such as climate change and natural disasters. As a constructive member of the international community, Jamaica continues to promote justice, equality and human rights. We remain steadfast in our commitment to democracy, the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes and multilateralism, values which we share with Japan — a genuine friend and partner in our national development.

Today also marks the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We convey our condolences to the souls of the atomic bomb victims and pay tribute to the survivors. On this occasion, Jamaica reaffirms its commitment to the cause of achieving a safer and more peaceful world, free of the nuclear shadow.

Last year was an active period of engage-

ment for our countries as we celebrated the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, which has allowed us to deepen the "J-J partnership." Our efforts have gained momentum through high-level political engagements with the visits to Japan by Jamaica's Foreign Minister H.E. Kamina Johnson Smith in February and December 2024. In February, the Speaker of the House of Representatives the Most Honorable Juliet Holness paid an official to Japan, becoming the first Jamaican speaker to ever do so. This historic visit facilitated inter-

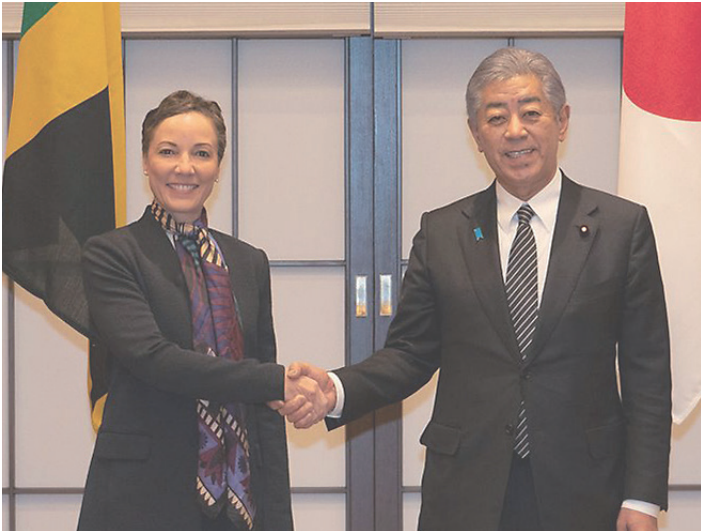
parliamentary exchanges and has served to enhance our bilateral cooperation.

As we deepen people-to-people exchanges and cooperation in sports, we welcome the selection of a Jamaican Olympian as a sport exchange adviser under the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme — Jamaica's sister prefecture. In the same vein, we look forward to our world-class athletes participating in the 2025 World Athletics Championships, which Tokyo will host in September. Our athletes will be

energized by the unparalleled support of the Tottori people during their preparatory training camp in that prefecture.

We also have the honor of commemorating Jamaica's National Day at the Osaka Expo on Aug. 6. We are excited to welcome many visitors to our pavilion under the theme "Out of Many, One People — Let's Link Up" to discover Jamaica while learning about our efforts to link up with Japan and other countries toward the achievement of the U.N. sustainable development goals.

Happy Independence Day, Jamaica!



Jamaica's Foreign Minister Kamina Johnson Smith and her Japanese counterpart Takeshi Iwaya pose at a bilateral meeting during the eighth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference in December. MOFA

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 Anniversary of
Their Independence**

**Association of Japanese Importers
of Jamaican Coffee**

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

Congratulations
to the People of
Jamaica on the
Anniversary
of Their
Independence

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to the Government and
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