

Iceland National Day Special

Growing exchanges strengthen partnership

HREINN PALSSON
AMBASSADOR OF ICELAND



Iceland and Japan, both island countries with great reverence for nature and a deep connection to the ocean and its resources, are alike in many ways, particularly regarding our values, environment and outlook on the world.

Iceland and Japan cooperate in trade, international affairs and look to each other for examples of good practices and sound policies that can improve societies. This includes science, geriatric medicine, studies of our natural environment and social policies.

Iceland ranks at the top of indexes that make international comparisons on gender equality and peace. Iceland is home to H.E. Vigdis Finnbogadóttir, who was the first female democratically elected head of state in the world and still serves as a positive international role model. Equality in Iceland is based on a strong grassroots advocacy that has worked tirelessly to advance the issue for the betterment of Icelandic society as a whole.

Iceland is uniquely situated in the North Atlantic at the edge of the Arctic Circle. Issues of the Arctic are of concern to the whole world amid the hazards of climate change. Japan is an observer state in the Arctic Council, and Iceland will welcome its first visit by a Maritime Self-Defense Force training mission later this summer.

People-to-people exchanges between Iceland and Japan are numerous, but special mention should be given to three. The Watanabe Trust Fund sponsors 50 projects involving academic exchanges annually, and both the Scandinavia-Japan Sasakawa Foundation and the Nippon Foundation have supported numerous academic and cultural exchanges through the years.

Tourism between our countries increased significantly last year, and the hope is that this will continue and further contribute to mutual understanding and knowledge about our countries and cultures.

As a result of the delayed 2020 Tokyo Olympics, a partnership has been established between Tama in western Tokyo and Iceland's capital Reykjavik, with Icelandic study groups visiting Tama's schools and gaining a deeper understanding of the city and of Japan.

In connection with Iceland's participation in the joint Nordic Pavilion at the

Osaka Expo in 2025, our President H.E. Halla Tomasdóttir made an official working visit to Japan last May. In addition, our minister of industries led a trade delegation to Japan this February, and a Nordic Kansai Business Alliance has since been established that will further strengthen trade and investment between Japan and the Nordic countries, including Iceland. In addition, Iceland's foreign minister concluded a successful visit to Japan this year with her counterpart in Tokyo, which was followed by a visit by our health minister.

On this 82nd celebration of the foundation of Iceland as a republic, we also celebrate 70 years of diplomatic relations between Iceland and Japan, and 25 years since the establishment of each other's embassies in Tokyo and Reykjavik. Relations between Iceland and Japan are strong and it is my privilege to work with the many friends of Iceland in Japan, friends of Japan in Iceland, my dedicated staff and our Japanese counterparts to further strengthen, develop and deepen this relationship.

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



Far left: A visitor admires blue ice inside a cave in Vatnajökull National Park. Left: Mount Stapafell towers over the harbor village of Aránarstapi, which is known for its dramatic cliffs and basalt formations.

ISTOCK



Studlagil Canyon is famous for its hexagonal basalt formations. ISTOCK

Congratulations
on the Occasion of the Icelandic National Day


NASCO Corporation

www.nasco-jp.com



Congratulations
on the Occasion of
the Icelandic National Day

 **Fuji Electric**
Innovating Energy Technology

Fuji Electric Co., Ltd.
Gate City Ohsaki, East Tower, 11-2, Osaki 1-chome, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo 141-0032, Japan



Congratulations
on the occasion of
the Icelandic
National Day

