

Bahrain national day

Four decades of ties with Japan continue to bear fruit

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AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF
BAHRAIN

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain celebrates the country's 41st National Day, the 40th anniversary of the diplomatic relations with Japan, the 13th anniversary of the Accession to the Throne of H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the seventh anniversary of the Bahrain Embassy in Tokyo.

On this occasion, the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Tokyo has the honor to renew, on behalf of the government and people of the Kingdom of Bahrain, its heartfelt greetings and good wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akhito and Empress Michiko, the government and the people of Japan.

This year, H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa arrived as a distinguished official working guest visiting Tokyo. His Majesty was very impressed by the resilience of the Japanese people and the drastic recovery of Japan from the aftermath of the March 11, 2011, disaster.

I am also delighted to pronounce that the Kingdom of Bahrain has enjoyed a strong relationship with Japan since the early years of independence. Over the years, the Kingdom of Bahrain has been an important focal point and friendly host for Japanese companies and enterprises.

Since I was appointed as the first ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Japan, our embassy team's main mission has been to enhance the Bahrain-Japan partnership, cultivate Japan's interest in our region and introduce genuine and productive cultural exchanges between the people of both countries. To this end, I must say with pride and gratitude that we have been achieving remarkable progress so far, with the kind assistance and cooperation from our precious friends, associations and companies in this beautiful and friendly country, Japan.

The nation of the Kingdom of Bahrain, with the democratic reforms of H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the premiership of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and the economic vision of His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, is managing the global challenges of the third millennium by working in harmony and peace with all the nations of the Middle East, the Arab world, the Islamic countries, and the rest of the East and



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain

the West, which is what featured the country as the Pearl of the Gulf region.

Finally, the team at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Japan would like to express its heartfelt gratitude to H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the sovereign of the country, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the prime minister, and His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince, for their vision and support in initiating this new era of Bahrain-Japan relations.

Modern and open

For most of the Japanese people staying in the Gulf region, Bahrain is an ideal destination for vacations. Sunny sandy beaches, beautiful green parks, fresh air and vigorous markets await them. The modern and liberal atmosphere of this democratic society must be remarkably appealing to Japanese visitors. The legendary Garden of Eden in the Old Testament and "Eternal Land" in the great epic of Gilgamesh are the exact words for this paradise on earth.

The Kingdom of Bahrain today is rapidly changing. H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has an ambitious vision of investing in the human resources to further develop the country's status as a cultural, financial and technological center, in a democratic constitutional monarchy. In fact, women's roles in the society are already large and education is open to the entire

nation. Educational centers are striving hard to provide the state-of-the-art knowledge and the technology to future generations.

Bahrain is a place that is continuously changing. There are numerous large- and small-scale luxurious development projects being undertaken. You may already know about the Bahrain International Circuit, the host of the fourth race in the Formula One racing circuit. There are also artificial island resorts, surrounded by emerald green seas that are increasingly becoming alluring destinations for relaxing vacations, as well as large-scale inland resorts with water park amusements, wildlife safari parks, luxurious hotels and shopping malls that will all visitors feel at home, regardless of the length of their stay. Moreover, there is a 25-km-long King Fahd Causeway linking Bahrain to Saudi Arabia. And to further facilitate access to the kingdom, the construction of another even larger causeway connecting Bahrain to Qatar is under way, which will be the longest in the world upon completion.

Your choice of the Kingdom of Bahrain as a regional base of business, as a destination for vacation or as your second home after retirement will enrich your life with more fascination and energy.

Strong business history

Japan and the Kingdom of Bahrain have traditionally maintained a very solid friendship. The relation between Japan and

the Kingdom of Bahrain dates back to 1934, when the first Bahraini oil shipment to Japan began after the discovery of oil in Bahrain in 1932. In May 1972, the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bahrain took place and since then, the relationship between the two countries has become profound. In fact, Japan's imports from the Kingdom of Bahrain have been increasing during the past six years, with the main source of import being petroleum products and aluminum.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, which is located at the heart of the Gulf region, is the gateway to the Middle East market as it has access to every market in the region by air, sea and road, quickly and efficiently. This strategic location provides Japanese companies with the fastest access to markets with high purchasing power for their goods and services. It is noteworthy that Bahrain's economy has long been the freest in the region for 18 years and has steadily improved its ranking worldwide. Today the Index of Economic Freedom ranked the country as 12th, ahead of Group of Seven economies. Furthermore, Bahrain gives approval to foreign companies to retain 100 percent foreign ownership and to benefit from the region's lowest taxes. In addition, the country has bilateral trade and economic agreements with more than 40 countries, as well as a free trade agreement with the United States.

With the support of such environments, 22 Japanese companies have set up their base in Bahrain and have been expanding their business in the region. To name a few in the financial services sector, Nomura Securities, Daiwa Securities and Bank of Tokyo Mitsubishi UFJ, chose Bahrain for its most historical and sophisticated financial center in the Middle East. In the manufacturing sector, Toyota, Yokogawa, Sasakura, Toshiba Power Systems, Fuji Electric, Yamato Kogyo, Ebara, Teikoku Electric Mfg., Yakult, DIC and SBI Pharmaceutical have chosen Bahrain as it is a gateway to the Middle East market. Moreover, many projects have been accomplished by Japanese companies including petrochemical, aluminum, gas, telecommunications, pellet and steel plants projects. I am confident that the presence of Japanese companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain will provide further opportunity for prospering our economic relationship.

On the occasion of 40th anniversary of the diplomatic relations with Japan, H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has visited the country this year and has driven a stronger tie into the

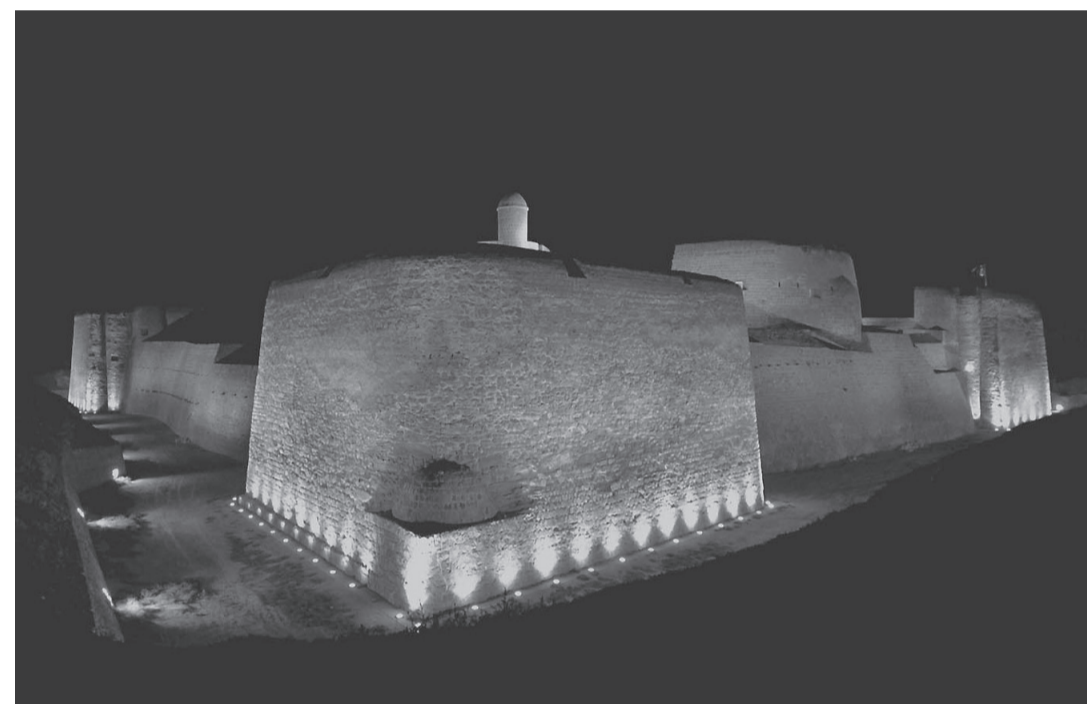


Past and present: The Bahrain World Trade Center in the capital Manama includes office towers, shopping malls and a five-star hotel. The Bahrain Fort (right), part of a complex designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2005, was built in the 14th century by the Portuguese. Excavations at the site, however, reveal six other distinct eras of the place, dating back to 3000 B.C. EMBASSY OF BAHRAIN

relationship between Japan and Bahrain through exchanging memorandums of understanding in various fields, including diplomacy, economy, education, medicine and defense.

Taking the opportunity of H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa's visit to Japan, the Japan Bahrain Economic Cooperation Association (JBCEA), of which currently 27 leading companies appear as members, was established to enhance mutual understanding and bilateral relations between Japan and the Kingdom of Bahrain through economic cooperation. As their first activity, they are planning to visit Bahrain in February 2013 to strengthen the economic ties between both countries. I am sure their establishment shall contribute to the sustainable growth of the economic relationship between the two countries.

To conclude my remarks, I wish the best of continuous pros-



perity and happiness to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress as well as the country of Japan and its people, the continuing progress in all fields for both countries and the continuance of the special relationship tying both of nations.

The role of the EDB

The Economic Development Board (EDB) is a dynamic public agency with an overall responsibility for formulating and overseeing the economic development strategy of Bahrain, and for creating the right climate to attract foreign direct investment into the kingdom.

One of the roles of the EDB is to provide leadership by uniting all the kingdom's shareholders and to attract inward investment into Bahrain as well as marketing the Kingdom of Bahrain abroad, while working closely with its embassies across the world to promote business investment opportunities.

The EDB Japan Office is the first point for Japanese business considering investment in Bahrain. The EDB offers an investor facilitation service to first-time investors, which includes understanding the objectives of investors, providing them with

information regarding the relevant procedures for setting up business, and helping them to form a network of contacts in Bahrain. Working across the governmental ministries and bodies, the EDB can facilitate easy entry to the Bahraini market and can provide ongoing support and advice.

Contact the EDB Japan Office to discuss how to make the first step toward enjoying the advantages of investing in Bahrain and accessing fast growing markets across the Middle East. Please visit www.bahrainedb.com for more information.

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to the People of the Kingdom of Bahrain
on Their 41st National Day

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