

# Nepal national day

## Working together for a brighter future for Nepal

Madan Kumar Bhattarai  
AMBASSADOR OF NEPAL

I am extremely honored to greet the friendly people of Nepal in Japan and all the Japanese friends on the happy occasion of the seventh Republic Day that is celebrated as the National Day of Nepal. I thank the Japan Times for kindly taking the initiative in providing a special supplement to mark our National Day.



On this momentous occasion, I consider it my duty to first extend sincere felicitations to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, H.E. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and H.E. Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida for their contributions in further promoting

Nepal-Japan relations. The Republic Day marks a historic landmark in the annals of modern Nepal when the people of Nepal achieved great victory in getting true democracy, civil liberties, human rights and sovereign powers. It was on this day in 2008 that Nepal turned into a Republic after consigning the old regime to history at the culmination of the second People's Movement of 2006.

The elections held on November 19, 2013 for the second constituent assembly has led to the constitution of a new government headed by Rt. Hon. Prime Minister Sushil Koirala. This has given a new dimension for an early promulgation of a new constitution and for taking suitable steps for promoting socioeconomic development of the country. Japan has remained a major supporter of our peace process

and provided logistic support to the recent elections.

Nepal and Japan have an excellent relationship of friendship and cooperation, having established formal diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level in 1956. However, our ties date back to the early period of history when the teachings of Lord Buddha, who was born in Lumbini, Nepal, reached Japan and many Buddhist temples came into being with a sizeable percentage of the population embracing Buddhism. His Majesty the 45th Emperor Shomu even abdicated in 749 to become a devout Buddhist monk. Japan was the first country when we decided in 1902 to send the first batch of eight Nepalese students, who contributed to injecting modernity in Nepal's social and economic scene.

High-level visits between the two countries were a major factor of our bilateral ties in years past and with the return of peace and democracy in Nepal, we are again promoting bilateral exchanges. Last year the Rt. Hon. President Dr. Ram Baran Yadav visited Japan for medical treatment. Japan's Foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba paid an official visit to Nepal in 2012 and several ministers, including Nepal's deputy prime minister and minister for foreign affairs visited Japan.

Japan has remained one of the top partners in our development endeavors. The focal areas of Japanese assistance are poverty alleviation; infrastructure for balanced and sustained economic growth; and peace building and democratization of Nepalese society. For the last five decades Japan has helped Nepal in several fields such as agriculture, health, education, industry, hydroelectric power, roads, communications, etc.

Japan has been providing grant assistance and technical cooperation and since early 2013, Japan has resumed yen loan assistance to Nepal after a hiatus of twelve years. This has truly created a new atmosphere for promoting the Japanese private sector to invest in Nepal for mutual benefit. There is a significant potential to enhance bilateral trade. Two-way trade in 2012-13 amounted to \$64.5 million, of which Japanese exports to Nepal were valued at \$53.5 million and Nepal exported goods came to just \$11 million.

Forty-five Japanese companies are working in Nepal and they are mostly active in service fields like tourism, hotels and restaurants. Japan supported us in organizing 2012-13 as Nepal Investment Year. Japanese investments in Nepal in fiscal 2012-13 amounted to \$2.3 million and there are significant possibilities of considerably enhancing the scope and volume of such investments for our mutual benefit as political stability and normalcy return to Nepal after the recent elections.

The unique feature of Nepal-Japan relations is the strength of our people-to-people ties. The people of Nepal have great fascination for the people of Japan, who helped us in undertaking various development activities in the rural areas of the country. Japanese volunteers are active in Nepal in promoting local development.

Japanese also have a great love for mountains and many ace climbers have successfully ascended Mount Sagarmatha (Everest.)

The record achieved by Yuichiro Miura in successfully becoming the oldest to climb the highest peak in the world last year and the achievements of top climbers like Junko Tabei, Hirotaka Takeuchi and



Mount Sagarmatha (Everest) is the world's tallest mountain. EMBASSY OF NEPAL

Tamae Watanabe have made great contributions in promoting Nepal's tourism. The government of Nepal is keen to further our bilateral ties in the field of tourism on a win-win basis.

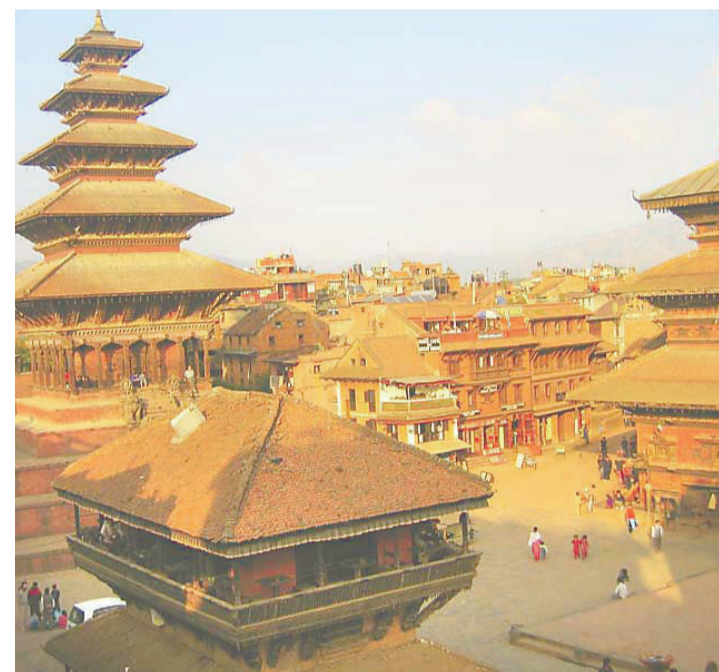
I would be failing in my duty if I don't recall the significant service rendered by the Nepalese diaspora in Japan in terms of further promoting Nepal-Japan ties and enhancing mutual understanding. We are already the largest community in Japan from the South Asia region and our number as of

Dec. 31, 2013, has reached 31,531 with a growth rate of 31 percent last year. I am sure our community will achieve new honor in coming years as our people here have not only helped in the development of Nepal, but also contributed to the Japanese economy.

With these words, may I once again greet all the readers of The Japan Times, which has rendered a great service to the cause of bilateral relations by publishing this special supplement to mark our Republic Day celebrations.



Also known as the BP Highway, after Nepal's first elected prime minister, work on the Banepa-Sindhuli road began in 1996 with Japanese grant assistance. The government of Nepal has set a target to complete it by March 2015. EMBASSY OF NEPAL



Located in the east corner of the Kathmandu Valley, Bhaktapur Durbar Square is one of the most charming architectural showpieces of the valley as it highlights the ancient arts of Nepal. EMBASSY OF NEPAL

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On The 6th Anniversary Of Their National Day

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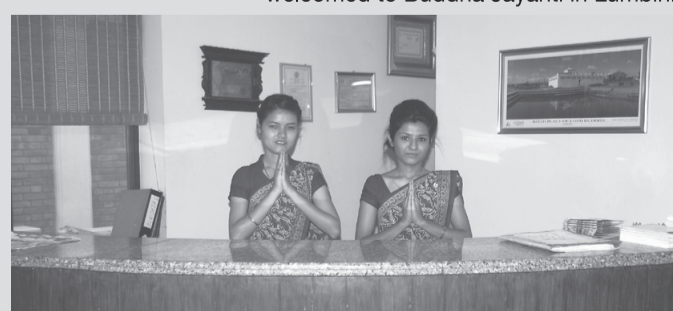
### Our Warm Congratulations

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On the 6th Anniversary of Their National day

2558th Buddha Jayanti and Lumbini festival on 14 May 2014.



The Right Honorable Prime Minister Sushil Koirala (third from right) was welcomed to Buddha Jayanti in Lumbini, where Buddha was born, on May 14.



Lumbini Hotel Kasai once again provided free lunch for 3000 people at the ceremony.

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