

Phillippine national day

A nation attaining greater heights

Manuel M. Lopez
AMBASSADOR OF THE PHILIPPINES

Today, the Philippine flag flies high in Tokyo as Filipinos around the world celebrate the 116th Anniversary of their journey as an independent people.



The proclamation of Philippine Independence in 1898 was a signal event in the history of the Filipino people's struggle for freedom, self-determination and nationhood that spanned centuries. More than a century later, the Philippines has emerged to become one of Asia's most vibrant democracies. It has joined the ranks of the world's fastest-growing economies, soaring on the wings of a sustained and unprecedented economic revival and period of political stability, driven by the unrelenting and meaningful reforms of the government of H.E. President Benigno S. Aquino III and the support of an empowered citizenry.

International experts are unanimous in their optimism: the Philippines has shifted to a higher growth trajectory and will continue to attain high rates of economic expansion on the back of rising investments and business confidence. The challenge is to sustain and make this growth



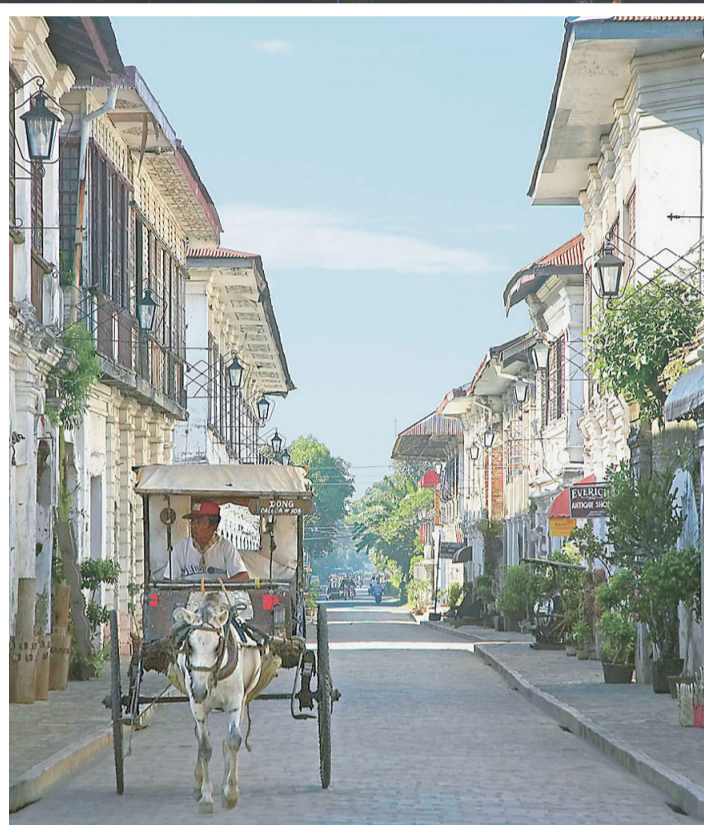
(Above) A night view of bustling and upscale Makati City, Metro Manila. (Right) Located on the west coast of the large island of Luzon, the city of Vigan is one of the countries' few remaining Hispanic towns. It is known for its cobblestone streets and unique architecture, earning it designation as a UNESCO World Heritage site. EMBASSY OF THE PHILIPPINES

more inclusive, in order to fully benefit the Filipino citizenry. This is an undertaking to which the Aquino government has fully committed itself under its social contract and in cooperation with our international partners.

Japan, our strategic partner,

occupies a singular position and important role as this bright chapter in the story of the Filipino nation unfolds. As our largest trading partner, main provider of development assistance and a leading source of investment and tourism business, Japan has been an active and committed partner. Outside of our active political and economic engagement, the gratitude of the Filipino people goes not only to the Japanese government but also to the companies and citizens who immediately extended substantial assistance and cooperation to our countrymen affected by Super Typhoon Haiyan last year, as well as by other calamities in the past.

The breadth and depth of Philippine-Japan relations, founded on the shared values of democracy, freedom, and respect for the rule of law, makes these ties some of Asia's most vibrant. The fruits of the Philippine-Japan strategic partnership will benefit



not only our respective peoples, but will be a key to the future stability and prosperity of our Asia-Pacific neighborhood as well. Mabuhay!



The Philippines is home to beautiful white sand beaches. EMBASSY OF THE PHILIPPINES

Strong economic growth seen on horizon

Teruo Asada
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-PHILIPPINES
ECONOMIC COOPERATION
COMMITTEE

On behalf of the members of the Japan-Philippines Economic Cooperation Committee, I would like to congratulate the Philippine people on the 116th anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

At the same time, I wish to extend my sincere sympathy to the survivors and offer my prayers for the victims of typhoon Yolanda (Haiyan), which caused severe damage to central Luzon last year. I



wish for the speedy recovery of the affected areas.

Now the Philippine economy is showing robust growth, with government-private cooperation under the powerful leadership of H.E. President Benigno S. Aquino III. Especially noteworthy was a GDP growth rate last year of 7 percent, the highest in the rapidly growing ASEAN nations.

This March, the Philippines achieved the signing of the long-awaited Comprehensive Agreement on Bangsamoro. I believe it will establish peace and development in the conflict-affected areas of Mindanao.

Since President Aquino took office, he has worked under the slogan of "no economic development without the

eradication of corruption" and we can see steady progress toward that end.

The Philippines and Japan are developing a closer relationship in trade, investment, economy and the interaction of people between the two countries. Regarding the trade between Japan and the Philippines, the value of Japanese exports to the Philippines is almost ¥1 trillion, while imports from the Philippines to Japan are nearly ¥800 billion.

Japanese direct investment in the Philippines remains steady every year. The Philippine government is proceeding with public infrastructure development in the areas of energy supply, public transportation and others. I believe this will significantly contrib-

ute to Philippine economic development, further deepening the bonds between the Philippines and Japan.

The Philippines and Japan can find common geographic strength as island nations. There has been an important economic relationship since the 16th century, establishing our two nations as important trading partners. No doubt, we will be a great driving force of economic development in ASEAN and the Pacific Rim. We wish to engage in further economic and personnel exchanges in the 21st century.

Again, I wish to express my heartfelt congratulations on the 116th anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

A strategic partnership founded on shared values

Benigno S. Aquino III
PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES

Filipinos around the world join their homeland today in celebrating the Anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence. After 116 years of determined nation-building, the Philippines looks to the future with renewed vigor and hope, riding a wave of empowering reforms, social and political renewal, sustained economic dynamism and a secured distinction in the international community.

Behind these gains is our unwavering resolve to achieve inclusive growth founded on good governance and we owe our progress as much to amity and partnership extended by our friends and partners around the globe. Japan, with whom we share the values of democracy, freedom and respect for the rule of law, has been a valued and dedicated supporter of the unfolding Philippine success story.

We foster with Japan one of our most enduring and important bilateral relationships. Japan is our largest trading partner, top provider of official development assistance (ODA) and a major source of investment and tourists. Japan has steadily supported our efforts to realize peace and development in Mindanao and, just as importantly, Japan is



a strategic ally in securing harmony, stability and rule of law in our region and its waters. We look forward to working with you in further enhancing close cooperation between our two countries.

Working to further strengthen Japan-Philippine relationship

Kenji Kosaka
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-PHILIPPINE
PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP
LEAGUE

On behalf of the Japan-Philippines Parliamentarians' Friendship League (JPPFL), I wish to express my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 116th Independence Day of the Republic of the Philippines.

Last November, the Philippines was severely hit by Ty-



phoon Yolanda (Haiyan). I wish to extend my sincere sympathy to the survivors and to offer my prayers for the speedy recovery of the affected areas.

Last May, I had the opportunity to visit the Philippines as JPPFL chairman, together with fellow members of the league, during which time I had the honor to call on H.E. President Benigno S. Aquino III. We also had the chance to speak with the Hon. Franklin M. Drilon, president of the senate of the Philippines and chairman of the Philippine-Japan Parliamentarian Association (PJPA); the Hon. Feliciano R. Belmonte, Jr., speaker of the house of representatives of the Philippines; as well as other members of the PJPA. During these meetings, we expressed our sympathies to those affected by the typhoon. We also actively exchanged views and opinions with our Philippine counterparts.

Japan and the Philippines have developed an amicable relationship based on longstanding exchanges and through the establishment of a "Strategic Partnership." It is my earnest intention to continuously endeavor to further strengthen the Japan-Philippines relationship.

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On the 116th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of the Philippines, we congratulate the Filipino people.

Mabuhay!

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on the 116th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of the Philippines

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