

Thailand national day

Working for betterment of lives

Thanatip Upatising
AMBASSADOR OF THAILAND

Dec. 5 marks the birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, also Thailand's National Day.

"We shall reign with righteousness for the benefit and happiness of the Siamese people." This is the accession oath His Majesty took upon his coronation on May 5, 1950, and it remains true today. For more than six decades, he has carried out his duties and responsibilities both as a constitutional monarch in accordance with the role defined under the constitution, and as a Thai king in keeping with the traditions and deep-seated beliefs evolved over the seven centuries of the country's existence. For more than six decades, he has dedicated himself to fulfilling the oath he made, to the benefit and happiness of the Thai people.

His Majesty is a pillar of national stability and unity and truly the king of all Thais. For up to eight months each year,

His Majesty used to travel to all corners of Thailand, including its remotest, most dangerous parts, talking with his people, learning their needs and helping them find ways to help themselves in resolving problems and improving their lives. Today there are some 4,000 royally initiated projects. Ranging from irrigation, farming, drought and flood alleviation, crop substitution, public health and distance learning to employment promotion, they have touched the lives of millions of Thais, particularly those in rural areas.

Beyond national boundaries, His Majesty's contributions have been recognized in a multitude of honors, including more than 30 international awards and more than 20 honorary degrees. In 2006, the United Nations awarded him the first United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Lifetime Achievement Award. According to the citation, it was "for his dedication to develop and industriously uplift the living condition of Thai people all through his 60-year reign." In 2009, the World Intellectual



His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand

Property Organization (WIPO) awarded him the first WIPO Global Leaders Award in recognition of his remarkable contribution to intellectual

property both as an inventor and as an active proponent of intellectual property as a tool for development. The Thai people's love and

loyalty is founded not just on respect for the institution of the monarchy but on the King personally — with his moral integrity, close contact with his people and his lifelong devotion to them, as evidenced in the many works he has undertaken on their behalf.

On Dec. 5 this year, Thais join together to celebrate the auspicious occasion of His Majesty's 87th birthday. This year is also auspicious for the people of Japan, for it is the year in which Japanese people commemorate the 25th anniversary of the accession to the throne of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. On this auspicious occasion, on behalf of the Royal Thai Embassy, Tokyo, I have the honor to extend my best wishes for the good health, happiness and prosperity of Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan as well as all the members of the Imperial family, whose long and friendly relationship with the Thai Royal Family is the solid foundation of the amicable friendship between the Thai people and the Japanese people over six centuries.

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Thailand's Royal Barge Procession is a ceremony of both religious and royal significance. Proceeding down the Chao Phraya River from the Wasukri Royal Landing Place in Khet Dusit, Bangkok, the procession passes the Temple of the Emerald Buddha, the Grand Palace, Wat Pho and finally arrives at Wat Arun. EMBASSY OF THAILAND



Left, Krabi is a popular beach destination in southern Thailand. Right, Red Lotus Lake is one of the most fascinating scenes that can be witnessed in Udorn Thani in northeastern Thailand. EMBASSY OF THAILAND



Economy set to recover as stability returns

Teisuke Kitayama
PRESIDENT, THE JAPAN THAILAND
ASSOCIATION; CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-
THAILAND BUSINESS FORUM

Please allow me to offer my warmest congratulations on the birthday of His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who has turned 87. I also offer my heartfelt wishes for the health and happiness of his majesty, other members of his royal family and all Thai people.

I was extremely concerned when street demonstrations in Thailand in the November

of 2013 eventually led to a coup d'etat in May because it was very difficult for me to know what was actually happening in the country. I am now very happy to know the political turmoil has subsided and stability is being restored. I hope for Thailand's swift return to democracy in accordance with its government's plan.

A look at the condition of the Thai economy shows that domestic consumption in general and auto sales in particular have remained weak since last year. Exports also stagnated due to economic downturns in China and Europe. As a result, Thailand's gross domestic product registered negative

growth in the January to March quarter of this year.

Still, considering that the new government will continue large-scale projects to build traffic infrastructure and prevent flooding, and the number of foreign visitors to Thailand is rising again, I hope that the economy will regain its vigor. Thailand also remains a very important manufacturing base for Japanese companies because of substantial industrial facilities constructed there over many years.

I am certain the integrated market of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations will become stronger and even more attractive with the creation of the ASEAN Economic Community in December 2015. Thailand, which is home to the supply chains of corporations from across the world, plays a central role among ASEAN member countries because of its geography and economy. I believe that Thailand is taking advantage of such assets to achieve further success next year and beyond.

As for Japan-Thailand relations, the number of Thai visitors to Japan jumped about 50 percent from a year before to

513,000 in the January to October period this year, while Japanese travelers to Thailand totaled 1,019,046 in the same period. I hope more Thai people will come to Japan and learn to love it. I also wish to see more Japanese visit Thailand to learn about its culture and society so that mutual understanding will deepen.

Needless to say, Japan and Thailand have developed close ties with each other over many years at all levels, including between the two nations' royal families in politics and through economic and cultural activities.

Japan is the largest investor in Thailand and I hope that in addition to being close business partners, the two nations will further broaden their social and cultural ties with each other. It is also my hope that the Japan Thailand Association and the Japan-Thailand Business Forum will help promote the friendship between the two countries.

On this occasion of his majesty's birthday, let me express my earnest hope that Japan and Thailand will further build on its long-running relationship so that our bond will become even more solid.

On the auspicious occasion of
the Anniversary of His Majesty's Birthday,
we humbly offer our respectful felicitations
and abiding loyalty to
**HIS MAJESTY KING
BHUMIBOL ADULYADEJ.**

ブミポン アドゥンヤデート国王陛下の
お誕生日に際して、
敬意を表し、
心からのお祝いを申し上げます。

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on the Occasion of His Birthday

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On the Auspicious Occasion
of the 87th Birthday of His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of the Kingdom of Thailand

The Japan Thailand Association
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On the Auspicious Occasion
of the 87th Birthday of His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of the Kingdom of Thailand

Japan-Thailand Business Forum (JTBF)
Chairman: Teisuke Kitayama
<http://www.jtbf.info>

**Royal Greetings to His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand
on the Occasion of His Birthday**

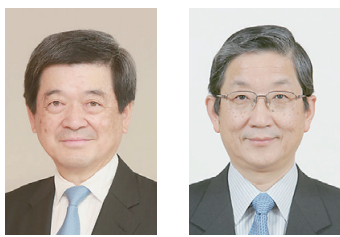
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Thailand national day

Developing deeper economic cooperation

Eizo Kobayashi and Toshiyuki Shiga
CHAIRMAN AND CO-CHAIRMAN OF
JAPAN-THAILAND TRADE AND
ECONOMIC COMMITTEE, KEIDANREN



Kobayashi Shiga

On behalf of the Japan-Thailand Trade and Economic Committee of Keidanren, we humbly offer our most sincere congratulations to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej on his 87th birthday.

Japanese companies engaged in a broad range of business in Asia have a keen interest in the development of economic relations between Japan and Thailand. Thailand, which hosts more than 1,500 Japanese companies, is the most important business hub in Southeast Asia, and the

country's importance has been increasing for Japan amid next year's scheduled inception of the ASEAN Economic Community.

We welcome the effort of the interim government launched in September toward a successful transition to democratic government. We would also appreciate Thailand's efforts to improve the business environ-

ment, including enhancing infrastructure, increasing the acceptance of foreign labor to solve the labor shortage and dealing with flood control, a challenge facing Thailand since the previous government.

In recent years, Japan and Thailand have been focusing on third-country cooperation, as seen in the Mekong region. For example, there is an idea of incorporating a third country in the Mekong region in a value chain established by Japan and Thailand, as there is a major business opportunity in creating transportation networks connecting Thailand with Laos and Cambodia and developing industrial areas in Myanmar.

In this respect, ongoing discussions on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) will make a great contribution to strengthening Japan-Thailand economic cooperation as the two countries are expected to deepen cooperation through the negotiations.

Keidanren will organize in February the 23rd Japan-Thailand Joint Trade and Economic Committee Meeting, in which business executives of both countries will discuss economic cooperation. It is the ideal time to have such a meeting and we would like to continue to contribute to the development of the bilateral relations via exchanges in private-sector level.

Relationship with Japan remains firm

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This year is another milestone in the close and cordial relations between Thailand and Japan. Despite various challenges, the relationship between Thailand and Japan stands the test of time and remains strong. Japan is Thailand's largest foreign investor and one of the biggest trading partners. Statistically speaking, the total trade volume between Thailand and Japan in 2013 was ¥6.49 trillion covering around 13 percent of Thailand's overall international trade value. The direct investment from Japan through Thailand's Board of Investment was about ¥282 billion in 2013, covering 53 percent of overall foreign direct investment to Thailand. Currently, there are more than 46,000 Japanese businesspeople in Thailand and the number of Japanese companies stands at over 7,000. The economic presence of Japan in Thailand is solid and still growing.

For people-to-people exchanges, since implementing the short-term visa exemption for Thai tourists in July 2013, the number of Thai tourists who visited Japan in 2013 dramatically increased by 74 percent to 453,600 people. In the first half of 2014, the Thai tourists coming to Japan increased



Opened in 2005, Bangkok's Siam Paragon shopping mall is one of the biggest shopping centers in Asia. EMBASSY OF THAILAND

61 percent compared to the same period in 2013. Meanwhile, the number of Japanese tourists visiting Thailand has also steadily increased by 12 percent to 1.53 million in 2013. The movement of the two peoples will bring closer relations between our two countries, as well as open more windows of business opportunity for the private sectors of both countries in the near future.

Politically, we have seen more dialogues between lead-

ers of the two countries, notably at the sidelines of ASEM Summit in Milan, Italy in October and at the 25th ASEAN Summit in Naypyidaw, Myanmar in November this year. On these occasions, the Prime Minister of Thailand General Prayut Chan-o-cha and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe exchanged views on Thailand's democratization and Japan-Thailand economic relations and cooperation, especially in infrastructure projects.

The foreign ministers of the two countries have also met a few times this year, including their meeting on the occasion of the United Nations General Assembly held in September. The Thai deputy prime minister also visited Japan officially in early November. These meetings and dialogues create closer ties between Thailand and Japan.

Next year, ASEAN will become one community of more than 600 million people with a total GDP of over \$2 trillion with a free flow of goods, services and human resources. Considering Japan's long-term presence in Thailand and Thailand's strategic location in the middle of ASEAN, Thailand will continue to be the hub of the Japanese production and business network in the region. There are vast opportunities for the two countries to grow together in Southeast Asia and beyond.

Thailand values truly the friendship and vital economic partnership with Japan. The Royal Thai Embassy is committed to do our best to further strengthen the cordial relationship and to expand cooperation in all fields for the benefits of Thailand and Japan, our true friend and strategic partner.

**Royal Greetings to His Majesty
King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand
on the Occasion of His Birthday**

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**We Send Our
Heartiest Congratulations to
His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej
of the Kingdom of Thailand
on the Auspicious Occasion
of His 87th Birthday**



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