

# Bahrain national day

## Appreciation of further deepening bonds between countries

Khalil Ebrahim Hassan  
AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF  
BAHRAIN TO JAPAN

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain in Tokyo celebrates the 43rd National Day, the 42nd anniversary of diplomatic relations with Japan, the 15th anniversary of the Accession to the Throne of H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the 9th anniversary of the Bahrain Embassy in Tokyo.



On this occasion, the embassy 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 Akihito and Empress Michiko, the government and the people of Japan.

I am 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 Bahrain to Japan, our embassy's main mission has been to enhance the Bahrain-Japan partnership, cultivate Japan's interest in our region and introduce genuine and productive cultural and economic exchanges between the people of both countries. Especially to implement our economic goals, we have formed a very strong joint force with the Japan office of the Economic Development Board (EDB), which is a dynamic public agency with an overall responsibility for formulating the economic development strategy of Bahrain and creating the right climate to attract

foreign direct investment into the Kingdom.

Together with EDB Japan Office, we serve as the first point for Japanese people exploring business opportunities in Bahrain, offering to facilitate easy entry to its market and helping them to form a network of contacts in Bahrain. This will pave the way to making the first step toward enjoying the advantages of doing business in Bahrain and accessing fast growing markets across the Middle East as a whole.

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 the beautiful and friendly country of Japan.

The Kingdom, with the democratic reforms of H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the premiership of HRH Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and the economic vision of HRH Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, is managing the global challenges of the third millennium by working in harmony and peace with all nations of the Middle East, the Arab World, the Islamic countries and the rest of the Eastern and Western world. This is the reason the nation is seen as the "Pearl of the Gulf region."

Taking this opportunity, we at the embassy of Bahrain would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the sovereign of the country; Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the prime minister; and Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the crown prince, for their vision and support in initiating this new era of Bahrain-Japan relations.

### Tourism

For most of the Japanese people staying in the Arabian Gulf,



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain

Bahrain is an ideal destination for vacations. Sunny and 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 for the Japanese visitors to stay. The legendary Garden of Eden in the Old Testament and the Eternal Land in the Great Epic of Gilgamesh perfectly describe this paradise on earth.

The Kingdom of Bahrain today is rapidly changing. The King has an ambitious vision of investing in human resources to further develop the country's status as a cultural, financial and technology center, into a democratic constitutional monarchy. In fact, women have already taken on larger roles in society and education is open to the entire nation. Educational centers are striving hard to provide state-of-the-art knowledge and technology to future generations.

Bahrain is a place that is continuously changing. There are numerous large and small-scale luxury development projects underway. You may already know about the Bahrain International Circuit, one

of the courses featured in Formula One racing. There are also artificial island resorts, surrounded by emerald green seas that are increasingly becoming alluring destinations for relaxing vacations, as well as large inland resorts themed with water parks, wildlife safaris, luxurious hotels and shopping malls that will make all visitors feel at home, regardless of the length of their stay. Moreover, there is the 25-km long King Fahd Causeway linking Bahrain to Saudi Arabia. And to further facilitate access to the Kingdom, the construction of another, larger causeway connecting Bahrain to Qatar is underway, which will be the longest in the world upon completion.

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

### Business

Japan and the Kingdom of

Bahrain have traditionally maintained a very solid friendship. Relations between Japan and the Kingdom of Bahrain date back to 1934, with the first Bahraini oil shipment to Japan after the 1932 discovery of oil in Bahrain. In May 1972, diplomatic relations between Japan and Bahrain were established and since then, the relationship between the countries has been profound. In fact, Japan's imports from the Kingdom of Bahrain have been increasing during the past years, with the main imports 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 provides quick and efficient access to every market in the region by air, sea and road. 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 over the past 20 years and has steadily improved its ranking worldwide. Today the Index of Economic Freedom ranked the country 13th, placing it ahead of some G7 economies. Furthermore, Bahrain allows foreign companies to maintain 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 such an environment of support, 30 Japanese companies have set up their base in Bahrain and have been expanding their business in the region.

To conclude, I wish the best of continuous prosperity and happiness to Their Imperial Majesties the Emperor and Empress as well as the country of Japan and its people, ongoing progress in all fields for both countries and the continuance of the special relationship tying our nations.



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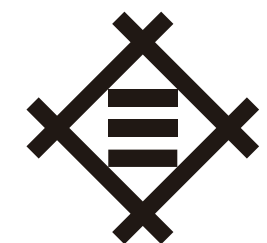
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