

Bahrain National Day

Thankful for strong relationship

Khalil Ebrahim Hassan
AMBASSADOR OF THE KINGDOM OF
BAHRAIN

The Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain celebrates its 44th National Day, the 43rd anniversary of the diplomatic relations with Japan, the 16th anniversary of the Accession to the Throne of H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the 10th anniversary of the 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 Bahrain, its heartfelt greetings and good wishes to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko,



His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain

the government and the people of Japan.

I am delighted to pronounce that Bahrain has enjoyed a strong relationship with Japan since the early years of independence. Over the years, 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, the 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 and economic exchanges between the people of both countries. Specifically from the economic perspective, we have formed a very strong alliance 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 for creating the right climate to attract foreign direct investment into the country.

Together with the EDB Japan Office, we serve as the first point of contact for Japanese people exploring business opportunities in Bahrain,



Bahrain World Trade Center EMBASSY OF BAHRAIN

offering to facilitate an easy entry to its market and helping them form a network of valuable contacts in Bahrain. This will pave the way for

them to make the first step toward enjoying the advantages of doing business in Bahrain and accessing fast-growing markets right across the Middle East as a whole.

To this end, I must say with pride and gratitude that we have been achieving remarkable success 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 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, Islamic countries and the rest of both the East and



Japanese garden in Bahrain EMBASSY OF BAHRAIN

the West. This is what has contributed to the country being the "Pearl of the Gulf Region."

Taking this opportunity, we, at the Embassy of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Japan would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the sovereign of the country, Prime Minister H.R.H. Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and the Crown Prince H.R.H. Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa for their vision and support in initiating this new era of Bahrain-Japan relations.

Modern, open society

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

itors to stay. The legendary "Garden of Eden" in the Old Testament and the "Eternal Land" in the Great Epic of Gilgamesh are the exact words for this paradise on earth.

Bahrain today is rapidly changing. H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa has an ambitious vision of investing in human resources to further develop the country's status as a cultural, financial and technology center, while maintaining 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 state-of-the-art knowledge and technology to future generations.

Bahrain is a place which is continuously changing. There are numerous large and small-scale luxury development projects being undertaken. People may already know about the Bahrain Inter-

national Circuit, which is the host of one of the races in the Formula One. 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 themed with water park amusement, wildlife safari parks and luxurious hotels and shopping malls that will make all visitors feel at home, regardless of the length of their periods of stay. A newly built traditional Japanese garden can be one of the healing places for long-term visitors, especially Japanese. Moreover, there is the 25-km-long King Fahd Causeway linking Bahrain to Saudi Arabia. To further facilitate access to the country, construction is underway of another even longer causeway, which will be the longest in the world upon completion, connecting Bahrain to Qatar is underway.

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

Strong business history

Japan and Bahrain have traditionally maintained a very solid friendship. The relationship 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, establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bahrain was completed and since then, the relationship between the two countries became profound. In fact, Japan's imports from Bahrain have been increasing during the past years, with the main import being petroleum products and aluminum.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, which is located at the very heart of the Gulf region, is the gateway to the Middle East market as it has 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 Heritage Foundation Index of Economic Freedom ranked the country as the 18th freest. Furthermore, Bahrain allows 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 an environment, 30 Japanese companies have set up their bases in Bahrain and have been successfully expanding their business in the region.

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



Bahrain skyline EMBASSY OF BAHRAIN

Congratulations to the People of the Kingdom of Bahrain on the 44th Anniversary of Their National Day



Chaudhry Asif Mahmood
CEO, Pak Japan group of companies

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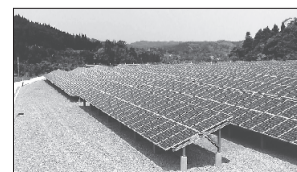
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Bahrain National Day

Encouraging strong bonds with Japan

Yoshihiro Shigehisa
CHAIRMAN OF THE JAPAN BAHRAIN
ECONOMIC COOPERATION
ASSOCIATION AND CHAIRMAN
EMERITUS OF JGC GROUP

In welcoming the 44th National Day of the Kingdom of Bahrain, it is an honor and a privilege as chairman of the Japan Bahrain Economic Cooperation Association (JBCEA) to express my warmest congratulations to H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa and the people of Bahrain. On this auspicious occasion, I wish to convey my most sincere wishes for the health and prosperity of H.M. King Hamad, H.E. Khalil Bin Ebrahim Hassan, ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Japan, and the people of Bahrain.

It gives me great pleasure that, under the leadership of King Hamad, Bahrain is excelling globally in a variety of diverse sectors, including political, diplomatic, economic, as well as culture and sports. As chairman of JBCEA, I am committed to contributing to the economic prosperity of both Bahrain and Japan.

In 2013, Japan welcomed H.R.H. Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa following the visit by King Hamad in 2012. In 2013, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Bahrain, and JBCEA's first delegation was also dispatched to Bahrain. I am convinced these mutual visits reflect the deepening relationship between Bahrain and Japan. Taking the opportunity, I now wish to introduce JBCEA.

JBCEA was established in April 2012 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Bahrain-Japan relationship and to coincide with the visit by King Hamad to Japan for furthering the business and cultural relationships between our two countries. Presently, a total of 27 companies from diverse fields, including engineering, manufacturing, food and beverage, finance, trading and pharmaceuticals are members of JBCEA. Let me explain a little about the business of

JBCEA members.

In the pharmaceutical area, Bahrain is an ideal market for both medicinal products and medical devices. Japanese companies are interested in entry into this market, with the prospect of expanding to the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) members and the Middle East and North African countries through Bahrain. In manufacturing, Japanese companies have delivered various types of equipment, including instruments and pumps, and wish to contribute through the performance of operation and maintenance work in the near future. Moreover, one firm has contributed to Bahrain's water industry by constructing desalination plants.

Meanwhile, in the cultural area, a Japanese-style garden has been completed and has become a place of relaxation and healing for many people in Bahrain.

Regarding small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Bahrain as described in a memorandum between the governments of Bahrain and Japan on King Hamad's visit to Japan, JBCEA and I sincerely aim to contribute to the further development of SMEs, as a matter of great importance for Bahrain. With this goal in mind, I wish for the understanding and strong support of the governments of both our countries.

Bahrain offers many distinct business advantages, including comfortable living standards for foreign residents, a tax-free system and a welcoming and free overall economic environment. Notably, with its central location on the Gulf Coast, Bahrain can be a stronghold for companies to access the huge and attractive GCC market. I believe this to be a very significant benefit in the region. I sincerely encourage increasing numbers of Japanese companies to develop business opportunities in Bahrain, with the accompanying considerable benefits to be brought to both Bahrain and Japan.

I would like to conclude by expressing my heartfelt wishes for Bahrain's continued development and further prosperity, and the heightening of the special relationship between our two countries.



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to the People of the Kingdom of Bahrain
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