

Iran National Day

Continuous growth in industrial, tourism sectors

Reza Nazar Ahari
AMBASSADOR OF IRAN

On the auspicious occasion of 38th Anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, I would like to convey, through the esteemed columns of The Japan Times, my respectful and earnest greetings to Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko, the Imperial family, as well as to the government and people of Japan. I would also like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate my fellow countrymen on this happy occasion.

On Feb. 11, 1979, the heroic sacrifices of the Iranian people, through the guidance of the late Imam Khomeini, resulted in the abolition of a despotic regime and establishment of the Islamic Republic in a referendum voted on by 99.8 percent of the electorate. During the past 38 years the Islamic Republic of

Iran has made significant strides in various fields and Iran has been able to stand firmly against foreign aggressions and preserve its independence. Today, we can clearly witness major scientific and technological breakthroughs at all levels of our society.

In Iranian society, the endeavors of the people for finding new solutions to national, regional and international problems are clearly seen and three important mottos based upon national consensus are "liberty," "independence" and "anti-imperialism." Parallel to these mottos, the expansion of the rule of law, legitimate liberties, dialogue, pluralism, vigorous pursuit of justice, tolerance and kindness are promoted.

For the security of the Persian Gulf, the Islamic Republic of Iran has been supporting common ground with its neighbors to fight terrorism, organized crime, drug smuggling and other problems.

Guaranteeing the security of oil supplies has been another objective of Iran and we have respected our commitment in this regard in spite of tensions and

sanctions. Emphasizing detente, mutual respect and dialogue is my country's main guideline and in this way amicable relations with our neighboring countries and expansion of bilateral and international relations are pursued, while any aggression or threats that could lead to instability and war are rejected.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is against the production, stockpiling, development and proliferation of nuclear weapons, and considers the production of a new generation of these weapons particularly inhibits constructive efforts toward disarmament and rejects production of any and all nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

I would also like to bring to the attention of esteemed readers that Iran, as a victim of terrorism, unequivocally opposes all forms and manifestations of terrorism and believes that to eradicate this menace, we should engage in serious and transparent international cooperation.

Post-JCPOA agreement

Following the agreement of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1 group (China, France, the U.K., the U.S., Russia and Germany) in July 2015, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a new horizon for expanding Iranian ties with other countries and companies came into view. The deal also triggered a wave of visits to Iran by high-ranking foreign officials and commercial delegations, considering Iran a safe place for investment, as well as political, judicial and technological cooperation.

Another salient development has been the expansion of tourist arrivals in Iran; more than double that of the global average since the implementation of JCPOA. The share of the income generated from tourism in Iran's gross domestic product is expanding (from 7.6 percent in



Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran

2015 to 9 percent in the current fiscal year). Iran is planning to construct 300 four-and five-star hotels over the course of five years and more than 1,750 tourism projects are currently underway in the country. Foreign companies and holding companies from France, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, Singapore, Thailand, Turkey, Spain, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and Azerbaijan are currently participating in the above-mentioned tourism industry cooperation across Iran.

The post-JCPOA and past-sanction era has also provided necessary grounds for industrial cooperation, especially in the automobile and aviation industries. Airbus and Boeing have both signed agreements to sell planes to Iran Air, allowing for the modernization of Iran's civil aviation industry.

In spite of these positive developments, the continuation of some banking restrictions related to non-nuclear sanctions has limited expected deals between Iran and some Western companies.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) appreciates Iran's implementation of a nuclear deal. IAEA Director Gen-



Hassan Rouhani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran

eral Yukiya Amano, who paid a visit to Iran in December, lauded Iran for its full implementation of JCPOA and called on all sides to keep the agreements alive. He also expressed the hope that the implementation of the nuclear deal would continue the present trend, a warning to the signatories not to lose an opportunity by delaying or hesitating over their implementation.

As stressed by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, Iran has never violated the nuclear deal and we are committed to our undertakings to never violate it.

Relations with Japan

From the early days of the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the Iranian government paid special attention to the promotion of bilateral amicable ties with Japan because the two nations have many common cultural and historical backgrounds and both countries are located in Asia. Based on this common ground, our political, economic, and cultural relations flourished. Although the historical relics and authentic documents show



Eram Garden is a historic Persian garden in Shiraz. EMBASSY OF IRAN

that relations between Iran and Japan originated more than 1,000 years ago, a new era in political relations between the two countries began at the end of the 19th century with the dispatch of political representatives to each other's capitals and paved the way for the commencement of a new relationship that resulted in the establishment of embassies and expansion of commercial and technical cooperation.

In the last four decades, cooperation of the two countries extended to many fields such as trade, infrastructure, energy, tourism, culture, science and technology, sports, movie production and more. Iran also has been a reliable supplier of energy to Japan and considers Japan as a friendly nation possessing financial and technological capabilities for Iran's economic development.

The Iranian government has

always welcomed further contributions by Japan to the peace and stability of Asia and the Middle East. Recognizing the political and economic importance of each side, the two countries maintain close consultations to explore solutions to problematic issues and sustaining world stability.

In 2016, the exchange of delegations of high officials of the two countries gained momentum. President Hassan Rouhani met Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the sideline of the U.N. General Assembly in New York where they expressed their willingness to expand their countries' cooperation in health, the environment, energy and technology, as well as the security of peaceful nuclear activities.

Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif visited Japan in December and, at a meeting with the Japanese prime minister, discussed a

range of issues on Tehran-Tokyo relations, as well as regional and international development. The minister, heading a mainly trade delegation, also met with members of the Japanese parliamentary friendship group and held talks with the Japanese minister of economy, trade and industry.

The Iranian foreign minister also had a meeting with his Japanese counterpart, Fumio Kishida, on Dec. 7. Regarding the JCPOA, Kishida expressed Japan's support to this agreement and the importance of its continuous implementation. They also agreed on promoting cooperation in the areas of nuclear safeguard measures. Iran's foreign minister emphasized the necessity of a road map for Iran-Japan cooperation, given the abundant mutual interest in bilateral political and economic interaction, and the need for peace, security and stability in

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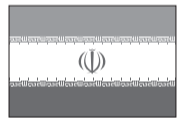
Expanding further relationships

Masahiko Komura
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-IRAN PARLIAMENTARIANS' FRIENDSHIP LEAGUE

On the occasion of 38th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, I would like to extend my sincerest felicitations to the government and people of Iran on behalf of the members of the Japan-Iran Parliamentarians' Friendship League.

Undoubtedly, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the P5+1 group (China, France, the U.K., the U.S., Russia and Germany) has created a new horizon for the expansion of international, regional and bilateral ties. Fortunately, economic cooperation between Japan and Iran has been on an upward trend.

Taking into consideration this encouraging development, my colleagues and I in the Japan-Iran Parliamentarians' Friendship League will make our utmost efforts for further expansion of our two countries' ties in all areas.



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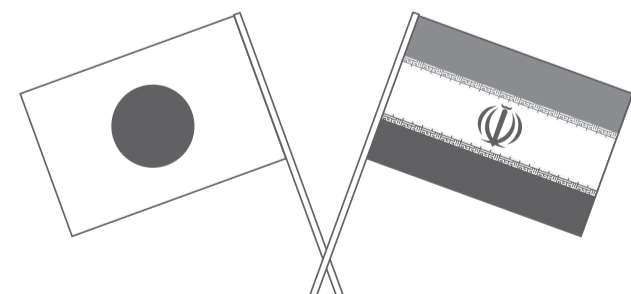


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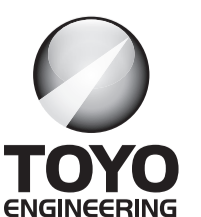
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Congratulations to the People of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the 38th Anniversary of Their Islamic Revolution Day



Iran National Day



Top: Sheikh Lotfollah Mosque in Isfahan is one of the architectural masterpieces of Safavid Iranian architecture. Bottom: Nasir ol Molk Mosque in Shiraz

EMBASSY OF IRAN

Birthplace of modern civilization

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the Middle East and East Asia.

With regard to economic cooperation, Japan has been one of the main economic partners of Iran during the past four decades. Iran is one of the key oil suppliers of Japan and in recent months around 10 percent of Japan's crude oil requirements are supplied by Iran. Japan has traditionally been one of the central suppliers of Iranian industrial needs and today, as potentials for new fields of cooperation between the two countries exist, I hope with the guidance and continued support of Japan's government, we would witness further participation of the Japanese private sector in Iran. I should also mention that agreements for petrochemical cooperation, renovation and expansion of refineries and power plants have recently been

signed between Japanese and Iranian partners.

In the cultural area, our two countries' ties date back to the Silk Road period in ancient times when this famous route linked East and West as the nerve system of Asian culture and civilization. Although the Silk Road traditionally linked "the country of flower, poem and mysticism" and "the land of rising sun," in recent decades our cultural exchanges have expanded to new horizons, including academic exchanges, joint movie production, archeology, holding of exhibitions, events and more.

Tourism

From a tourism point of view, Iran enjoys two important and unique features. The first is its exceptional geographic location among countries in the

world. As a strategic point, Iran acts as a bridge that connects the European and African countries to Asia, as well as the Commonwealth of Independent States to the Middle East and Persian Gulf region. Such a feature has great potential for Iranian tourism.

The second is Iran's fabulous tourism attractions that may be appreciated from two aspects: the extent of various types of tourism, such as historical, cultural, natural, pilgrimage, adventure tourism and more. Additionally Iran's four seasons and simultaneous access for enjoying marine sports, such as swimming in one location, and winter activities and sports at another location in the country are appealing. In addition to the above-mentioned features, Iran is among the pioneers of global civilization and, as one of the most ancient civilizations in the world, one can rarely find a museum that does not boast Persian monuments or artifacts.

I am delighted to see the number of Japanese tourists to Iran has been on an increasing trend and last year, we witnessed nearly 30 percent growth in the number of Japanese travelers to my country. As I have mentioned on other occasions, we at the embassy in Tokyo are ready to provide more information about Iran's famous places of interest and facilitate visits.

Congratulations

on the Occasion of the 38th Anniversary
of the Glorious Islamic Revolution of Iran



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