

Vietnamese President's Visit Special

Celebrating the 45th anniversary of relations

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H.E. Tran Dai Quang, president of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, and his wife will pay their first state visit to Japan from May 29 to June 2 at the invitation of Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and

Empress Michiko.

The president's visit takes place at a critical juncture in our bilateral relations, as the two countries and peoples are celebrating the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations (1973–present). The president's visit to Japan embodies the frequent exchanges of high-level meetings among the top leaders of the two countries. Last year, the Vietnamese people rejoiced as they warmly welcomed the Emperor and Empress of Japan in their resounding historic state visit to Vietnam. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe paid his second official visit to Vietnam last January and attended the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Week in Da Nang last November. Speaker of the House of Representatives Tadamori Oshima visited Vietnam last May.

The president's visit also marks a new period of development for the extensive strategic partnership between the two countries, making it more concrete and substantive across all areas by furthering political trust, widening bilateral cooperation, promoting economic connectivity, fostering people-to-people exchanges and working together on regional and international issues of common concern.

Economic, trade and investment linkages have always been key drivers in the development of bilateral relations. We noted with satisfaction that last year Japan reclaimed its place as the top foreign investor in Vietnam with total capital of \$9.11 billion, four times bigger than that of 2016. Additionally, in 2017, the bilateral trade volume reached \$33.4 billion for the first time, an increase of 11 percent compared to 2016's volume. These figures demonstrate the increased interests and trust of the Japanese business circle in Vietnam's macroeconomic outlook and its business environment.

Accordingly, 2017 is regarded as a year of numerous records for Vietnam's economic performance. Its gross domestic product growth rate amounted to 6.81 percent, a record high for the past six years while the inflation rate remained as low as 3.53 percent. Foreign direct investment extended to \$36 billion, another high of the past 10 years. Also,

for the first time, Vietnam's total trade volume exceeded \$400 billion.

Both Japan and Vietnam have been active in the establishment of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). With the expectation that CPTPP will take effect next year, there are strong beliefs and high expectations from both sides for much closer economic, trade and investment relations between our two countries.

People-to-people exchanges have now become one of the most prominent factors in our bilateral friendship and cooperation. Japan now has become the No. 1 destination for young Vietnamese seeking further study abroad opportunities. Specifically, around 75,000 Vietnamese students are currently studying at different universities and educational institutions across Japan while more than 120,000 diligent Vietnamese trainees are working in every prefecture of the country. Human resources development has become an increasingly important aspect of the mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries.

Approximately 800,000 Japanese tourists visited Vietnam and 320,000 Vietnamese toured Japan last year. Since Japan has become one of the top destinations for Vietnamese tourists, those figures will undoubtedly increase in the years ahead.

Vietnam and Japan share many strategic interests. Both countries hold common views on many regional and international issues. Both Vietnam and Japan support the free, open and rule-based trading systems. The two countries share views on the importance of maintaining peace, security, safety and freedom of navigation and overflight, self-restraint and resolving maritime disputes by peaceful means in accordance with international law, including the United Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

In the presence of the Imperial Couple, the president, his wife and the embassy of Vietnam will host a reception to commemorate the 45th anniversary of the establish-

ment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The reception will be an important venue for partners and friends from both countries to express gratitude and demonstrate the close bonds that our two people have built, as well as the firm belief in the bright future of our bilateral relationship.

This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.



(From left) Empress Michiko, Emperor Akihito, Vietnamese President Tran Dai Quang and his wife Nguyen Thi Hien in Hanoi during a state visit on March 1, 2017.



Tokyo's Vietnam Festival has been an annual Vietnamese cultural event in Japan since 2008. VIETNAM FESTIVAL 2018

Our Heartiest Welcome
to H.E. Tran Dai Quang,
President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
and his spouse Madam Nguyen Thi Hien,
on Their State Visit to Japan

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