

Qatar National Day Special

Soft yet energetic diplomacy key to moving forward

H.E. HASSAN BIN MOHAMMED RAFEI AL-EMADI
AMBASSADOR OF THE STATE OF QATAR



leader Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed Al Thani.

On this very special occasion, I am honored and privileged to express, on behalf of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, the government and people of Qatar, my deepest reverence, warmest greetings and best wishes for good health and happiness to Their Imperial Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako, the imperial family, Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga and the friendly people of Japan.

The National Day of Qatar is a glorious occasion to consolidate national principles and values and also a great opportunity in which feelings of joy, the spirit of national belonging and loyalty to leadership are combined.

This year's celebrations, however, are different due to the exceptional circumstances and challenges facing the whole world due to the coronavirus pandemic. Fortunately, Qatar has largely succeeded in dealing with the pandemic and remained among the countries in the world least affected thanks to the effective health policies and our persistent investment in developing the health system and medical personnel.

Realizing the importance of international cooperation in dealing with the pandemic, Qatar has supported the efforts

of the international community and provided the necessary assistance and medical aid to more than 70 countries and international organizations. Qatar remains committed to continuing to support international efforts to accelerate the manufacture of vaccines and provide them in a fair way to the countries most in need.

The energy sector in Qatar was able to overcome the repercussions of this pandemic with minimal damage. Production and export operations were not affected. Qatar Petroleum continued to fulfill its obligations to all partners, including Japan. In addition, the workflow is proceeding without interruption in the main energy projects represented by the liquefied natural gas (LNG) production expansion project, in addition to the projects abroad.

To mitigate the economic damage from the pandemic, Qatar has taken swift measures to support the private sector, maintain the integrity of the financial and banking markets and preserve the integrity of the state's general budget. Despite the negative effects of low oil and gas prices on the public budget, the state continues to focus spending on health, education and major infrastructure projects.

Qatar maintained its credit rating in the studies conducted by international rating agencies for the year 2020, which unanimously affirmed the country a high credit rating, while confirming the stable outlook for its economy. Nevertheless, the country is working to reduce dependence on volatile oil and gas revenues by promoting economic diversification and encouraging investment.

Our efforts to achieve the goals of Qatar National Vision 2030 continue by encouraging and are stimulating investment and improving the business environment. In light of our long-term vision, we were able to overcome the developmental obstacles



Doha's skyline at night

and challenges that we have been through in the past few years due to blockades.

Qatar's position in the international and regional arena was enhanced thanks to its soft and energetic diplomacy, as well as its humanitarian contributions during the pandemic. At the height of the pandemic, which caused lockdowns, travel restrictions and the suspension of international flights, Qatar Airways provided a vital lifeline to many stranded people to return to their home countries. Japan highly appreciated the continuation of Qatar Airways direct flights to trans-

port Japanese citizens stranded in other Middle East and East African countries to return home.

At the regional level, Qatar has succeeded in hosting fruitful rounds of dialogue rounds between the United States and the Afghan Taliban movement, which led to the signing of a historic agreement between the two sides in Doha in February. In September, intra-Afghan negotiations between the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban Movement, started in Doha, with the aim of achieving comprehensive and

lasting peace in Afghanistan.

Qatar attaches great importance to its distinguished relations with Japan, as one of our largest partners in the field of LNG, and the biggest trading partner. There is strong desire and political will at the leadership level in the two countries to enhance these relations and bring them to advanced stages of a long-term strategic partnership. We are determined to continue working closely with our Japanese friends to advance the relationship to greater heights and fulfill the leadership ambitions of both countries.

In closing, I wish to express my deepest appreciation to The Japan Times for giving me this opportunity to address its distinguished readers on this happy occasion. I hope that the coronavirus pandemic will end and life will return to normal soon, and I hope that the new year will be a year full of health, wellness, happiness, peace and prosperity for all.

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



Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani greets the emperor and empress at the banquet following the enthronement ceremony on Oct. 22, 2019.

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Taking Qatargas partnership to new heights

The energy relations between the State of Qatar and Japan, which is one of the largest importers and the foundation customer of Qatari LNG, have grown since the first liquefied natural gas (LNG) cargo was delivered to the shores of Japan in January 1997. Qatargas' inaugural delivery was made possible by the historic sale and purchase agreement with Japan's Chubu Electric Power Co., and seven other Japanese buyers, who jointly import 6 million metric tons per annum (mtpa) of LNG from Qatargas.

Qatar's position as the largest LNG producer in the world is enhanced by its commitment to producing LNG in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner. Ever since the first successful delivery of LNG cargo to the Kawagoe Receiving Terminal in January 1997, Qatargas has safely and reliably delivered more than 3,100 LNG shipments to Japan over the past two decades.

Qatar demonstrated its unwavering commitment to the people of Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011, when Qatar prioritized the delivery of additional LNG shipments to help meet Japan's urgent energy needs.

Qatargas values the friendship with Japan, the foundation customer of Qatari LNG. It has established term contracts to supply LNG with many of the key Japanese buyers including JERA Co., Tohoku Electric Power Co., Kansai Electric Power Co., Chugoku Electric Power Co., Tokyo Gas Co., Osaka Gas Co., Toho Gas Co. and Shizuoka Gas Co.

Apart from these term contracts, Qatargas also delivers a significant amount of Japan's spot LNG requirements. Today, our commitment to serving the energy needs of our valued customers has never been stronger. As the world's premier LNG company, our customers know that they can rely on Qatargas to deliver safe and reliable LNG.

Qatargas, established in 1984, pioneered the LNG industry in Qatar and today is the largest producer of LNG in the world with an annual production capacity of 77 mtpa from its world-class facilities in Ras Laffan Industrial City, Qatar. The state of Qatar has announced plans to raise the country's LNG production capacity to 126 mtpa by 2027, representing an increase of 64% from the current volume.

Qatargas' chartered LNG shipping fleet is not only the largest in the world, but it



also includes the largest LNG vessels. Our fleet provides unprecedented flexibility in meeting the needs of our customers. Every day, we produce and deliver LNG safely and reliably to every corner of the globe.

Since production first began in 1996, Qatargas has successfully delivered shipments to 31 countries and is committed to meeting the world's demand for safe, reliable and clean energy. Through its operational excellence, Qatargas is not only adding value to its production chain

and contributing to the Qatari economy, but also plays a pivotal role in Qatar's National Vision 2030, to ensure efficient energy supplies for the country, creating new markets and contributing to the local community. In addition to LNG facilities, Qatargas operates the Jetty Boil-Off Gas facility, Al Khaleej Gas, Barzan Gas, two helium plants, the two Laffan Refineries (among the largest condensate refineries in the world) and the Ras Laffan Terminal on behalf of all shareholders.

Congratulations

to His Highness
Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani
the Amir of the State of Qatar
on National Day



Chubu Electric Power Co., Inc.

1, Higashi-shincho, Higashi-ku, Nagoya 461-8680, Japan
Tel: 052-951-8211
www.chuden.co.jp/english

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Idemitsu Kosan Co., Ltd.

<https://www.idemitsu.com/>
7-2, Marunouchi 2-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-7028, Japan
Tel: +81-3-3213-3171

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Japan-Qatar Friendship Association

Chairman: Satoru Katsuno

Qatar National Day Special

A strong and trusting relationship

SATORU KATSUNO
CHAIRMAN OF JAPAN-QATAR
FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION



On behalf of Japan-Qatar Friendship Association (JQFA), I would like to offer my sincere congratulations to the Amir of the State of Qatar, His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad

Al-Thani, and the people of the State of Qatar on the 49th anniversary of their National Day.

Although there is a distance of 8,000 kilometers between Qatar and Japan, both countries have had a close relationship for nearly 50 years.

In the history of both countries, the supplying of liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Qatar to Japan commenced in 1997 and laid a solid foundation for the development of bilateral relations. Taking this as an opportunity, Qatar has achieved remarkable development and currently leads the global LNG business. Following

relations of mutual trust that have been fostered due to the stable supply of LNG for over 20 years, Qatar and Japan are deeply tied in broad fields, including politics, economics, culture, education and medical care.

I assumed the role of chairman of JQFA in July. This year, due to the coronavirus pandemic, world affairs are chaotic, which makes it difficult to conduct activities as usual. I deeply regret that I had to postpone my visit to Qatar. However, whatever happens, the relationship of trust JQFA has developed over the years with Qatar is solid and unwavering. I believe a bright future will come soon.

In the 2020 Autumn Conferment of Decorations on Foreign Nationals, His Excellency Mohammed bin Saleh Al-Sada, the former minister of Energy and Industry of Qatar, was honored with the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun. He has dedicated himself to strengthening relations between Japan and Qatar for many years through various fields, as well as ensuring a stable energy supply. Especially, soon after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, he contributed to the supply of additional LNG to Japan when

energy security fell into critical situations at that time. The honorary award to the official was pleasing news that symbolizes growing friendly relations between our two countries. Taking this opportunity, I would like to reiterate my sincere respect to the achievements.

While Tokyo will host the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games next year, Qatar will host the 2022 FIFA Soccer World Cup for the first time in the Arab world. I hope that both countries will host the events and make them wonderful ones that will be remembered by people all over the world.

The year 2021 marks the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries. As chairman of JQFA, I value our relationship of mutual trust that has been fostered for many years and would like to completely devote myself to further deepening our mutual interaction and developing together.

In conclusion, I extend my most sincere congratulations on Qatar's continued prosperity and development under the superior leadership of the sheikh and hope that our relationship of mutual trust will continue to develop further.



The finals of the FIFA World Cup 2022 will be staged at Lusail Stadium.



Aerial view of the beautiful city of Doha

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