

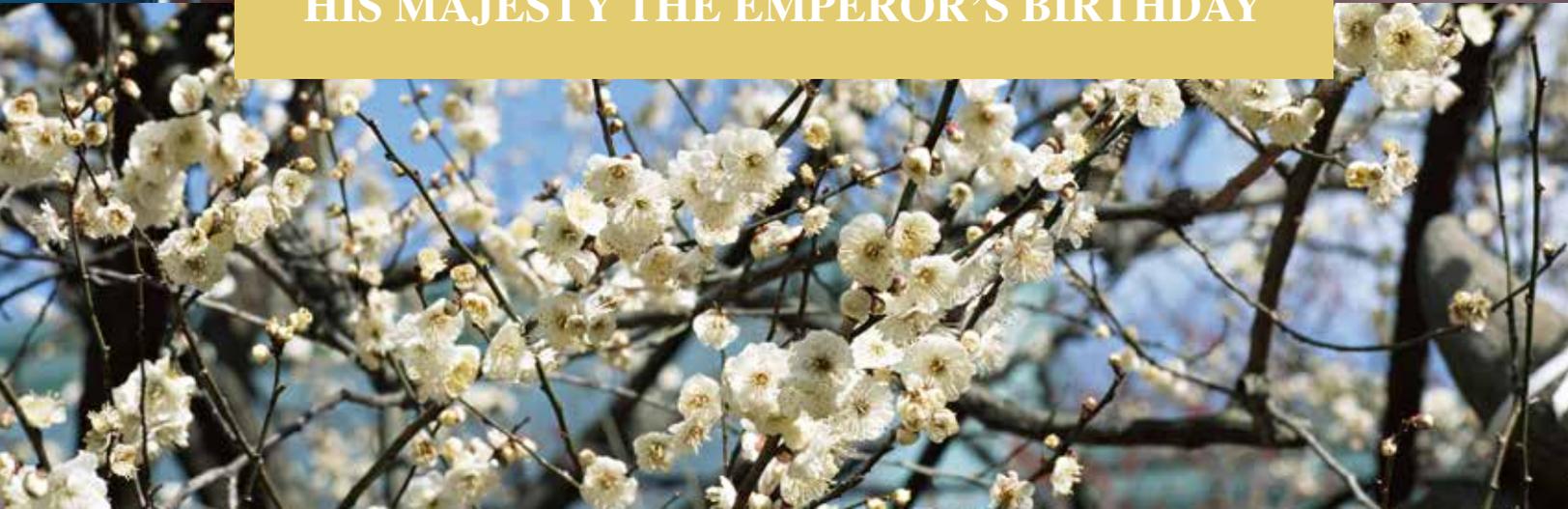
Japan

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HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY



His Majesty the Emperor's Birthday

Message from H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan



The 23rd of February marks the birthday anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor Naruhito who became the 126th Emperor of Japan on May 1st, 2019, starting the new Imperial Era of “Reiwa” which means “beautiful harmony.” His Majesty the Emperor Naruhito was born on 23rd February, 1960. This day is celebrated as a national holiday in Japan.

On this auspicious occasion, on behalf of the Government and the people of Japan, I would like to extend our sincere gratitude to the leadership and the people of Pakistan for their good wishes and felicitations on the second official birthday celebration of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan. It also gives me immense pleasure to share my thoughts with the people of Pakistan and the Japanese community in Pakistan on this important occasion.

Since his accession to the throne as the 126th Emperor of Japan, His Majesty the Emperor Naruhito stands as the symbol of Japan and of the unity of the people. His Majesty and the Imperial Family facilitates the fostering of good relations with foreign countries including Pakistan.

His Majesty is very active in the international arena especially in dealing with the global development agenda together with Her Majesty the Empress Masako who is the Honorary President of the Red Cross in Japan, supporting the poor in the medical and healthcare area. With special focus on the water issue which extends beyond academia, since 2003 when His Majesty the Emperor served as Honorary President of the 3rd World Water Forum in Japan, His Majesty has spoken

actively on the topics such as the issue on water shortage in developing countries, water and climate change or disaster management at various international conferences.

Since the establishment of diplomatic relations on 28th April 1952, Japan-Pakistan relations have steadily progressed and have become increasingly multifaceted over the period of time. In fact, two years prior to the establishment of diplomatic relations, Japan had already opened a trade office in Karachi in 1950. A year later, Pakistan sent its delegation to the San Francisco Peace Conference where Pakistan became one of the first countries to establish peace between Japan. Following these events, Japan and Pakistan successfully established diplomatic relations in 1952. This portrays the long history and traditional friendship between the two countries. In terms of Pakistan's relationship with the Japanese Imperial House, His Majesty the Emperor Emeritus Akihito and Her Majesty the Empress Emerita Michiko, who are the parents of His Majesty the Emperor Naruhito, visited Pakistan as the then-Crown Prince and Princess in 1962 on the 10th anniversary of our diplomatic relations. This became the first visit by the members of the Imperial House to Pakistan.

Since I arrived in Islamabad as the Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan two years back in February 2019, my focus and priority is to further develop and deepen our bilateral relations and strengthen the long - standing and warmly-cherished mutual cooperation.



On bilateral relations, Japan and Pakistan have been in close contact at the high level in the past few years and have continued to hold meaningful discussions at various levels despite the COVID-19 pandemic. In December 2019, Mr. SONOURA Kentaro, Special Advisor for Foreign Affairs to President ABE Shinzo of the LDP, visited Pakistan and held meetings with high ranking Pakistani officials and discussed matters of mutual interest. From the Pakistani side, besides the visit of Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi to Japan in April 2019, President Dr. Arif Alvi and the First Lady Mrs. Samina Alvi on the invitation of



the Government of Japan, paid an official visit to Japan to attend the enthronement ceremony of His Majesty the Emperor Naruhito in October 2019. Also, Mr. Hammad Azhar, The then Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, visited Japan in January 2020. These mutual exchanges of visits by high-level dignitaries have paved the way for further bolstering the bilateral relations between the two countries. Foreign Minister MOTEGI Toshimitsu held a phone call with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi in May 2020. Similarly in the field of defence, in August last year, Defense Minister KONO Taro had a video teleconference with General Qamar Javed Bajwa, Chief of Army Staff and the two sides exchanged views on further promoting defence cooperation between Japan and Pakistan.

The cordial and friendly relationship between Japan and Pakistan in modern history is closely related to cooperation in economic and business fields. In the 1950s and 60s, Pakistan exported raw cotton to Japan. Japan processed the cotton into yarn and cloth, and exported them to the world including Pakistan. Japan, in return, exported spindles to Pakistan. In this way, Japan and Pakistan helped each other in their industrialization, particularly, in the textile sector. In terms of Japan's economic assistance to Pakistan, Japan has supported the socio-economic development efforts made by the Government of Pakistan in numerous sectors. The Kohat tunnel, Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS), the construction of steel bridges near Fort Munro with the Japanese financial assistance worth Rs 14 billion which connects Southern Punjab to Balochistan and Gwadar via N-70, are only a few examples of Japanese assistance and friendly cooperation.

Japan has remained one of the major bilateral development partners of Pakistan since 1954, extending assistance in multi-faceted sectors. This includes concessional assistance for development projects, grant assistance for social sector projects and technical cooperation for technology transfer and human resource development.

Japanese concessional loan, grant assistance, and technical cooperation, have been utilized mostly for supporting infrastructure and social development, including assistance on creating roads, power generation / transmission / distribution, water and sanitation, agriculture, education, health, security, disaster management, climate change and human resources

development. Among others, polio eradication has remained one of the focused areas of Japanese assistance. Since 1996, the Government of Japan together with other partners has been consistently assisting Pakistan to eliminate this disease from the country, with a cumulative amount of USD 226 million. As this year marks the 25th anniversary of Japan's anti-polio assistance to Pakistan, I pay tribute and deeply appreciate the efforts of polio workers who have been engaged in house-to-house vaccine campaign amid the growing anxiety about the second wave of COVID-19 in Pakistan. I assure you that the Government of Japan will continue to help Pakistan in cooperation with international partners to reduce the immunity gap and protect its children from the highly infectious disease.

As for COVID-19, the Government of Japan has been continuously supporting the efforts by the Pakistani Government to deal with the coronavirus pandemic. Japan delivered diagnostic kits in the beginning of February last year, three weeks before the first case was reported in Pakistan. As of now, Japan's counter COVID-19 support to Pakistan reaches USD 17 million in total.

In addition to the Japanese assistance implemented through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan also funds many of the UN agencies' projects in Pakistan, especially in the areas of refugee assistance, livelihood improvement in the erstwhile FATA districts, border management, and strengthening law enforcement agencies.

The Government of Japan wishes to further develop amicable relations between the two countries in a wide range of fields. Especially, economic cooperation has played an important role in strengthening ties between the two countries. The total amount of Japan's economic assistance to Pakistan by March 2020 amounts to USD 13 billion, starting from accepting Pakistani trainees back in 1954 (Technical assistance: USD 600 million, Grant assistance: USD 2.8 billion, concessional loans: USD 9.6 billion). This makes Japan the second largest economic partner of Pakistan. Let me take this opportunity to share with you that ongoing effort is underway by the relevant authorities and organizations after the Japanese Government amended the 'Immigration Control Act' and took comprehensive measures for the acceptance of



skilled foreign workers from all over the world, the signing of the Memorandums of Cooperation (MoC) between Japan and Pakistan in December 2019 for man power export will open up new opportunities and mutual cooperation between the two countries. Under this new scheme, I feel confident that in light of its potential, Pakistan will be able to send its skilled workforce to Japan.

With regard to the cooperation in the area of security and counter-terrorism, the Government of Japan is committed to continuing to support the Government of Pakistan and its valiant security forces to combat terrorism, with support amounting to more than USD 137 million. Japan has been supporting various projects of counter-terrorism such as the improvement of facilities and equipment of Pakistani law enforcement agencies dealing with counter-terrorism, including projects on improving airports and ports security, providing x-ray inspection equipment, and strengthening border security. In addition, this month, Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force ship took part in the Exercise AMAN21 organized by Pakistan Navy to strengthen defense cooperation between the two countries and other participant countries.

Peace and stability in Afghanistan is of paramount importance for bringing prosperity in the region and Pakistan. I always appreciate the significant efforts by the Government of Pakistan to facilitate the Afghan peace process, and hope that these efforts would herald a new era for peace and stability in the region. I also reaffirm that the Government of Japan will continue to work with Pakistan to strengthen peace and stability in the region.

Besides extending cooperation in the socioeconomic development, the Government of Japan also offers various scholarships to Pakistani students every year for higher studies in Japan, including professional training courses aiming to provide an opportunity to learn modern knowledge and advanced skills in Japan. In 2018, Japan also started another



human resource development scholarship, called JDS, which is exclusively for young Pakistani civil servants to acquire higher education in top Japanese universities, expecting them to be the future leaders of their country.

Cultural and people-to-people exchanges are the foundation of our friendship from a long-term perspective. In this regard, I actively support events and programs which encourage further contacts and deepen mutual understanding. I would be extremely happy to see the people working together to further promote people-to-people contacts between the two countries.

Through the opportunities to visit different parts of Pakistan and meet the people, I am happy to say that the Pakistani people are very hospitable and loving. I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude, respect and best wishes to all Pakistani people who are so hospitable to us and work hard to overcome challenges and bring the country forward. On this occasion of the birthday celebrations of His Majesty the Emperor, we must renew ourselves to further develop our close relations and make a firm resolve to deepen our cherished ties, which will amplify the welfare of people of both the countries.

Also, I wish to share with you that year 2022 will mark the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Pakistan. I would like to invite all Pakistani people to come forward and join hands with us to celebrate this historic relationship in a splendid way.

To conclude, I assure you that the Embassy of Japan in Pakistan and I will continue working with our esteemed partners in Pakistan to achieve our shared goals of peace, stability and development. It is my firm belief that the friendly relations between Japan and Pakistan would grow further stronger in the years ahead.

Long Live Japan-Pakistan Friendship.



H.E. Ambassador MATSUDA Kuninori held meetings with Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi and Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed

On December 31, H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, held a meeting with Foreign Minister H.E. Shah Mahmood Qureshi.

During the meeting, Ambassador MATSUDA stated that Japan places significance on its relations with Pakistan which has the importance as a gateway to the region, and expressed his satisfaction that the two countries have build a cordial friendship for a long time. Japan is further promoting the relationship with Pakistan in various areas, the Ambassador added. He commended the significant efforts made by the Government of Pakistan to facilitate the Afghan peace process.



In response, Foreign Minister Qureshi expressed his appreciation to the historical friendship from the Japanese government and the people of Japan, including various assistance from Japan. He stated that Pakistan would like to continue working closely with Japan through implementing economic cooperation and expanding trade and investment.

Both sides agreed to vitalize dialogues on various levels and in broad areas such as political, security and economic issues throughout 2021. Furthermore, they also agreed to closely coordinate and cooperate to prepare for the 70th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relationship in 2022.



On January 12, Ambassador MATSUDA Kuninori called on Federal Minister for Interior Sheikh Rashid Ahmed and discussed with him matters of mutual interest.

Virtual Japan Fest 2020

Presented by Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi

Every year, Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi organizes Japan Fest designed to promote understanding and friendship between Japan and Pakistan. However, due to COVID-19, this year's event was celebrated from our official Facebook page. The four day online event (24-27, Nov) showcased daily videos related to Japanese culture, traditions and lifestyle. The programs includes food demonstration, Ikebana, Bonsai and Origami workshop, Japanese literature review and some exciting musical performances by Japanese artists. The videos are accessible by visiting the following link; <https://facebook.com/JapanConsulateKarachi/>

VIRTUAL JAPAN FEST PROGRAM

Day1

- Opening Speech by the Consul-General of Japan in Karachi
- Greetings from the Administrator Karachi
- You can now make sushi at home!

Day 2

- Ikebana Flower arrangements
- Quarantine life of a MEXT student in Japan
- Tale of Genji: A classic work of Japanese Literature (by Pakistan Japan Literature Forum)

Day 3

- Meiji Jingu Tour
- Origami workshop
- Glimpse in the life of a MEXT Student in Kyoto
- Grant Assistant for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP)

Day 4

- Tree Talks with Khuwaja Mazhar
- Life in Japan
- Music Performance



Mr. ISOMURA TOSHIKAZU
Consul General of Japan



Mr. Iftikhar Shilwaani



Our Hosts: Mr. Katsunori Ashida and Ms. Shiza Syed

日本祭



HIGHLIGHTS



A great learning Experience. Ashida san is an exceptional host, chef and teacher. Thank you to Japanese Consulate for arranging the event. My best wishes for Pakistan and Japan relations
Ali Ladhubhai.



I am honoured to have this opportunity to join Virtual Japan Fest. What makes it very special to me that I worked for 25 years in Consulate General of Japan in Karachi and still in contact with many friends - Priest Moriyasu Ito from Meiji Shrine



Japan's Economic Assistance to Pakistan



Japan grants USD 9.5 million to Pakistan for confronting COVID-19

Islamabad: 15th December 2020

Japan has extended a grant assistance of JPY 1 billion (approx. USD 9.5 million) to Pakistan for enhancing its capacity to confront COVID-19 and other infectious diseases. Notes to this effect were signed and exchanged between H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan and Mr. Noor Ahmad, Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, in Islamabad on December 15, 2020.

Japan's counter COVID-19 support reaches USD 16.91 million

As for COVID-19, Japan delivered diagnostic kits in the beginning of February, three weeks before the first case was reported in Pakistan. Then, Japan provided a total of USD 7.41 million to Pakistan through international organizations. With this support to the NDMA, Japan's support to Pakistan for controlling COVID-19 will reach USD 16.91 million in total.



Japan extends USD 4.7 million to improve sanitary environment in Islamabad

Islamabad: September 8, 2020

Japan has extended grant assistance of JPY 500 million (approx. USD 4.7 million) to the Metropolitan Corporation Islamabad (MCI) for improving sanitary environment of the capital by procuring garbage disposal vehicles from Japan. Notes to this effect were signed and exchanged between H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan and Dr. Noor Ahmad, Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Affairs, in Islamabad on September 8, 2020.



In this program, special vehicles such as the Garbage Compactor, the Skip Lifting Vehicle and the Sewer Jet Sucking machine will be provided to MCI. This grant assistance will help to improve the sanitary environment and beautification of Islamabad.

Celebrating 20 years of Pakistan Japan Business Forum (PJBF)



Pakistan Japan Business Forum (PJBF) launched in 2001 is celebrating its 20-years of existence in 2021. With Aziz Memon as the founding Chairman, it was subsequently steered by Farrukh Sheikh, Abdul Kader Jaffer, Sohail P. Ahmed and now with Kalim Farooqui as its present Chairman and Tetsuya Suematsu as Senior Vice Chairman. Each one of them have immensely contributed towards the robust foundation and for raising the height of the pedestal at which the PJBF stands today.

The Forum was then officially launched with the exclusive purpose of getting the business communities of both Pakistan and Japan to cooperate in order to further improve trade and investments between the two friendly nations who will celebrate their 70 years of successful diplomatic relations next year.

Abdul Razzak Dawood, the then Federal Minister of Commerce, Industries and Production had consented to be the Chief Guest at PJBF's launching and who in his present capacity as Advisor to the Prime Minister Imran Khan for Commerce, Textile, Industry and Production is helping PJBF in its efforts and under whose leadership PJBF last visited Japan in 2018 as part of the Joint Dialogue between the two governments.

The forum carries out numerous dedicated activities which include monthly meetings of the board of directors to discuss business matters and issues if any, interactive sessions with prominent individuals, regularly organize exhibitions and seminars, arrange trade delegations to Japan every year comprising of PJBF members belonging to SME's for networking with their Japanese counterparts.



Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendations 2020 Upon Pakistan Bonsai Society (PBS)

The Government of Japan has conferred Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendations 2020 upon Pakistan Bonsai Society (PBS), in recognition of their significant contributions towards the promotion of Japanese art in Pakistan and enhancing cultural relations between the two countries. Pakistan Bonsai Society (PBS) was established by a group of dedicated bonsai enthusiasts formed in 1998 with an aim to promote exquisite Japanese art in Pakistan. The organization arranges various workshops throughout the year in major cities like Karachi, Lahore, Multan, Gujranwala and



Hyderabad. PBS also holds monthly and annual exhibitions where society members display their bonsai plants. Till now, the organization has arranged hundreds of workshops in order to spread skills required to create beautiful specimens. Currently, the organization has two functional chapters in Karachi and Multan. PBS has also been arranging numerous field trips to observe specimens in the wild. Experts also observe shaping of bonsai suitable plants due to harsh weather conditions in the wild. The organization has so far trained thousands of people through live demonstrations, workshops and tutorial videos.

Pak-Japan Trade: Channel of Social Connectivity Seminar, University of Sindh in Jamshoro

On Wednesday, 4 November 2020, an International seminar titled "Pak-Japan Trade: Channel of Social Connectivity" was held at University of Sindh, Jamshoro. This friendship event focused on the business ties and cultural commonalities between Pakistan and Japan. While speaking to the distinguished gathering, Consul-General of Japan, Mr. ISOMURA Toshikazu, said that about 80 Japanese companies are currently operating in Pakistan and some potential Japanese companies are keenly interested in investing into the Pakistani economic growth, however, the



present COVID-19 pandemic has deflated these hopes for investment. President of Pakistan-Japan Intellect Forum (PJIF), Mr. Iqbal Burma emphasized on various opportunities to promote mutual relations between the two countries. Vice Chancellor of University of Sindh, Prof. Dr. Mohammad Siddique Kalhoro, while presiding over the seminar mentioned that Japanese investors must be encouraged to invest in Pakistan as the country is becoming digitally sound and tech savvy. Later, a vote of thanks was delivered by Dr. Ghazala Panhwar, Associate Professor of University of Sindh which concluded the proceedings of the seminar.

Clean and Green Pakistan: Jasmine Trees planted in the Japanese Park Islamabad



The Embassy of Japan, in line with the PM Imran Khan’s initiative, ‘Clean-Green Pakistan’, donated 20 Jasmine trees to Japanese Park in Islamabad on 10 November. H.E. MATSUDA Kuninori, Ambassador of Japan to Pakistan, along with the State Minister for Climate Change, Honorable Ms. Zartaj Gul planted Jasmine trees at the Park during a tree plantation ceremony.

The Government of Japan Confers “The Order of the Rising Sun, Silver Rays” upon Ms. ORITA Toshiko, Vice President, Pakistan-Japan Cultural Association, Islamabad



H.E. Ambassador MATSUDA Kuninori, on behalf of the Government of Japan, on December 23rd conferred the prestigious decoration upon Ms. ORITA for her contributions on promoting Japanese culture in Pakistan at a ceremony held at his residence with limited participants, including Ms. ORITA’s family and her close friends, Dr. Abdul Hafeez Shaikh, Federal Minister on Finance & Revenue, and Mrs. Nadene Shaikh, while taking infection prevention measures against COVID-19.





Japanese Government Offices in Pakistan

Embassy of Japan in Pakistan

53-70, Ramna 5/4, Diplomatic Enclave 1, Islamabad 44000
 (P.O. Box 1110, Islamabad)
 Tel: +92(51) 9072500
 Fax: +92(51) 9072352
 E-mail: ryoji@ib.mofa.go.jp (Consular/Visa)
 economic@ib.mofa.go.jp (Economic)
 culture@ib.mofa.go.jp (Public Affairs)
 Website: <http://www.pk.emb-japan.go.jp/>

Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi

6/2, Civil Lines, Abdullah Haroon Road, Karachi 75530
 Tel: +92(21) 35220800
 Fax: +92(21) 35220815
 E-mail: culture@kr.mofa.go.jp
 Website: <http://www.kr.pk.emb-japan.go.jp/>

Office of the Honorary Consul General of Japan in Lahore

1 Mcleod Road, Lahore
 Tel: +92(42) 37225015-7
 Fax: +92(42) 37233518
 E-mail: anw@shiraziinvestments.com.pk

Office of the Honorary Consul General of Japan in Peshawar

No. 38, St. 3, Sector N-3, Phase 4, Hayatabad, Peshawar
 Tel: +92(91) 5828378
 Fax: +92(91) 5817569

Office of the Honorary Consul General of Japan in Quetta

53-A, Jinnah Town, Samungli Road, Quetta
 Tel: +92(81) 2829478, 2829633
 Fax: +92(81) 2829515
 E-mail: knadeem@cyber.net.pk

Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) Pakistan Office

Serena Office Complex, 4th Floor, G-5/1m Khyaban-e-Suhrawardy, Islamabad
 Tel: +92(51) 9244500-07
 Fax: +92(51) 9244508
 Website: <http://www.jica.go.jp/pakistan/English/index/html>

Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

2nd Floor, Block-B, Finance & Trade Centre, Shahrah-e-Faisal, Karachi
 Tel: +92(21) 35630727-32
 Fax: +92(21) 35630733-34
 E-mail: pak@jetro.go.jp
 Website: <http://www.jetro.go.jp/>

For information on Japanese diplomacy, politics, economy and culture, please visit:
<http://www.japanpolicyforum.jp/> <http://web-japan.org/>