

**Remarks by Mr. Akira Ouchi,
Consul-General of Japan in Karachi,
on the occasion of the Opening Press Conference for “*Dekho Japan!*”
October 24, 2013 at Pearl Continental Hotel**

Respected Mr. Azeem Qureashi, General Manager of Pearl Continental Hotel,
Distinguished representatives of the Japanese cultural groups,
Distinguished representatives of the media,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalam alaikum.

It is my great pleasure to be here with you all today at this Opening Press Conference for “*Dekho Japan!*”, a special Japan Week organized by Pearl Continental Hotel, Karachi in cooperation with the Consulate-General of Japan, along with the Japanese cultural groups, namely Ikebana International Karachi Chapter, Ohara Study Group, Sogetsu Study Group, Metal Seinen, Pakistan Bonsai Society and Pakistan Ju-Jitsu Federation. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the people concerned, from Pearl Continental Hotel to the Japanese cultural groups, for successfully organizing this event.

Starting from today, October 24 till the 31, the people in Karachi will have an opportunity to “see” and experience at firsthand the fascinating diversity of Japanese culture, here at the Pearl Continental Hotel. Through “*Dekho Japan!*”, you will be able to “see” both traditional and modern Japanese culture.

As for traditional culture:

Three *ikebana* (Japanese art of flower arrangement) groups, namely Ikebana International Karachi Chapter, Ohara Study Group and Sogetsu Study Group respectively showcases their exquisite and unique flower arrangements at the main entrances and lobby hall of the Hotel as well as here in Sakura Restaurant, as you can see. The visitors can enjoy over thirty magnificent flower arrangements throughout the week.

Pakistan Bonsai Society exhibits their *bonsai* (Japanese art of growing a miniature tree in a container) at the main corridor of this floor. The visitors will have an opportunity to see these beautiful botanical art forms from October 24-27.

There will also be Japanese Dolls Exhibition opposite the *bonsai* exhibition, where variety of Japanese traditional dolls will be on display. The variety of dolls, including the grand “*Hina-matsuri*” (Doll Festival) dolls, owned by the Consulate-General of Japan, will be on display from October 24 to 31.

Also, the visitors can see the demonstration of one of the traditional Japanese martial arts, *Ju-Jitsu*, by the members of Pakistan Ju-Jitsu Federation. They will hold two sessions of demonstration on October 26, from 16:00-17:00 at the Conference Room.

As for modern culture:

Metal Seinen, a Pakistani youth group actively engaging in promoting Japanese pop culture in Pakistan, will organize series of interesting events on October 26 and 27 at Zaver Hall. Through their programmes, Metal Seinen aims to introduce Japanese pop culture such as *anime* (animation), *manga* (comics), music and video games to the visitors. One of their highlights event will be *cosplay* contest. *Cosplay* is an abbreviation for “costume play”, and it is a performance art in which participants dress up in costumes and pretend to be a fictional character, usually *anime* or *manga* character.

“*Cosplay*” enjoys strong international popularity in recent years, and Japan hosts this world’s biggest *cosplay* contest, “World *Cosplay* Summit” annually since 2003.

I sincerely hope that the people in Karachi will take this opportunity to experience “*Dekho Japan!*”. Through such direct experience, I believe they will broaden their perspectives and deepen their understanding on Japan, its culture and its people.

I would like to conclude my remarks by expressing my heartfelt thanks to you all, for your sincere and dedicated cooperation in organizing this “*Dekho Japan!*” successfully. The Consulate-General of Japan at Karachi will continue to conduct various cultural activities to bring the peoples of Pakistan and Japan even closer; thereby further promoting mutual understanding and strengthening the friendly relationship between the two countries.

Thank you and bahot shukriya.

[End]