



70th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan Sri Lanka

"Awakening of a New Era -The Partnership in the Rising Vista"



Message from Hon. Minister for Foreign Affairs (Japan)

Ayubowan, Wannakham,

Today marks the beginning of the year 2022, the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Sri Lanka. I am very pleased to celebrate this auspicious milestone with all of you. Japan and Sri Lanka have much in common culturally and religiously, and share a long history of people-to-people exchanges. Based on that foundation, our two countries have achieved a lot together through the last 70 years. I am very much honoured to note here that Japan has been contributing to Sri Lanka's development through wide ranging assistance from construction of highways, hospitals, hydroelectric power plants to de-mining. As Sri Lanka's economy has advanced in recent years, many Japanese companies have started business in Sri Lanka, and the number of Japanese company has now reached 104.

Sri Lanka is an important partner for Japan in building a free and open international order based on the rule of law, or realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific". In cooperation with Sri Lanka, Japan will continue to contribute to its sustainable development as a hub in the Indian Ocean.

Japan will always remember that the former President J. R. Jayewardene kindly offered support for Japan's postwar return to the international community, or that Sri Lanka extended warm assistance to Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. Japan, likewise, has been actively supporting our friends in Sri Lanka when they faced difficulties, such as at the time of devastation caused by the Tsunami upon the major Earthquake off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia in 2004. I am also very pleased that Japan was able to provide 1.46 million doses of vaccines to Sri Lanka so far in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope that the pandemic will subside quickly and that the people and the leaders from our two countries will be able to visit each other as frequently as before.

I am confident that this special year will be a fruitful one for us, and will be a precious opportunity for both countries to strengthen the ties even further, including between our nationals.

Stuthi, Nandri.

H.E. HAYASHI Yoshimasa,
Foreign Minister of Japan



Message from Hon. Foreign Minister

I am pleased to send this message to herald the year-long celebration of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Japan. While the historical and cultural connections between the two nations span a much longer period, the establishment of diplomatic ties was formalised in 1952, following the signing of the Treaty of Peace with Japan in San Francisco in September 1951.

It is widely acknowledged that Ceylon (as Sri Lanka was then known) played a major role in providing support for a post-war free Japan at this conference. Sri Lanka's representative, Finance Minister the late J.R. Jayewardene spoke in defense of a free Japan and informed the conference of his country's refusal to accept the payment of reparations that would harm Japan's economy. His reason was "We do not intend to do so for we believe in the words of the Great Teacher [Buddha] whose message has ennobled the lives of countless millions in Asia, that 'hatred ceases not by hatred but by love'."

He ended his speech by stating: "This treaty is as magnanimous as it is just to a defeated foe. We extend to Japan the hand of friendship and trust that with the closing of this chapter in the history of man, the last page of which we write today, and with the beginning of the new one, the first page of which we dictate tomorrow, her people and ours may march together to enjoy the full dignity of human life in peace and prosperity."

Thenceforth, the enduring bonds of friendship and amity between our two peoples and nations have withstood the vicissitudes of time, which underscore the strength, vibrancy and resilience of our bilateral relations. Over the years, our relations have blossomed into a multi-faceted and robust partnership encompassing several areas, including political, economic, social, cultural, technical and educational cooperation, as well as growing people to people contacts. It is a matter of great satisfaction that Japan has emerged as one of the key development cooperation partners for Sri Lanka, and has steadfastly provided aid and financial assistance for our country's economic development. While there are several major infrastructure development projects underway in the country with Japanese financial and technical assistance, such as the Phase II expansion of the Bandaranaike International Airport and the Storm Water Drainage Project for Colombo, as well as the recently inaugurated state of the art 6 lane Kelaniya Bridge at Peliyagoda among many other projects, the commissioning of Sri Lanka's national television, Rupavahini in February 1982 and the 1001 bed Sri Jayewardene Hospital in 1983 as outright grants symbolize the abiding friendship between the people of Japan and Sri Lanka.

On the international stage, notwithstanding the constantly changing dynamics of world politics, the friendly and cooperative relationship between Sri Lanka and Japan has remained strong and stable. We have been rendering each other support on issues relating to our vital interests and facilitating close cooperation in the fields of trade, economy, education, culture, employment and tourism among others.

I am pleased to note that since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan has stood by us and assisted Sri Lanka with generous contributions of vaccines, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other aid to support the COVID-19 national response efforts, which will undoubtedly be long remembered by the people of Sri Lanka. As long as the two countries and the two peoples move forward hand in hand, I am confident that Sri Lanka-Japan relations in the post-pandemic era will mature and move towards a better future for both our peoples.

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Sri Lanka and Japan, I sincerely wish the two countries and peoples, progress and prosperity. May the relations between Sri Lanka and Japan continue to develop and thrive, and the strong friendship between our two peoples last forever!

Prof. G.L. Peiris
Foreign Minister of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka



Message from H.E. the Ambassador of Japan to Sri Lanka

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

සුව අලුත් අවුරුද්දක් වේවා!
இனிய புத்தாண்டு வாழ்த்துக்கள்!
Akemashite Omedeto Gozaimasu!

It is said that the first rays of the New Year bring blessings and good fortune. On this auspicious moment in the rising sun, I wish to offer my sincere prayer for everyone's good health, happiness and prosperity in the coming days.

The dawn of the New Year also signifies the awakening of a new era for Japan and Sri Lanka, as we set first step into the 70th anniversary of the establishment of our diplomatic relations. Through adorning this special year with a variety of commemorative events and programmes, we will explore our terra incognita to further expand the horizon of our long-standing relationship.

The Government of Japan has designated the year 2022 as "Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year" to celebrate anniversaries with seven countries in the region. The respectful readers are warmly invited to join in this celebration, by getting respective events endorsed under the same banner, to put the hearts of Southwest Asia together as one. We are looking forward to having your vigorous participation to make ever-lasting memories together!

H.E. MIZUKOSHI Hideaki,
Ambassador of Japan



Message from Hon. State Minister of Foreign Employment Promotions and Market Diversification

Sri Lanka and Japan have historical, cultural and social ties. This year marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between our two countries, which began in 1952.

Japan, a long standing close friend of Sri Lanka, is a country that has continued to support our country's economic social, educational and cultural revival and we will not forget that it quickly intervened and assisted our country in times of distress.

I am pleased to note that His Excellency the President of Sri Lanka, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Hon. Prime Minister, Mahinda Rajapaksa with the His Excellency of Prime Minister of Japan Fumio Kishida and the Government of Sri Lanka are delighted to work closely with the Government of Japan.

Due to this close relationship between Sri Lanka and Japan, employment and education opportunities have been provided to the youth of our country in Japan, I commend the Government of Japan, the business community as well as the Japanese people for their generosity in signing the Memorandum of Understanding between the two countries for employment opportunities in Japan, which are now operating successfully under the direct supervision of my Ministry.

I hope that the close relationship between our two countries will be further strengthened.

With best wishes,

Piyankara Jayaratne
Hon. State Minister of Foreign Employment Promotions and Market Diversification



Message from Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment Chairman

On behalf of the Government and the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations and best wishes on the Celebration of the 70th Anniversary of the Diplomatic Relations between Sri Lanka and Japan.

Looking back, our two countries have come a long way; through partnership, peace and prosperity. We have identified Japan as a united entity amongst other countries in the world who promote peace, stability and development that have benefited our people and beyond.

As we celebrate the 70th Anniversary of our Diplomatic Relations, I am very pleased to extend our gratitude towards the co-operation extended by Japan on the Memorandum of Understanding signed between Sri Lanka and Japan which opened doors for larger number of Sri Lankans to look for 'greener pastures' in Japan. I am happy to mention that the Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment (SLBFE) is successfully implementing the process of directing Sri Lankan Employees to the SSW Employment Programme in Japan. The SSW Employment Programme has become more popular among Sri Lankans who seek foreign employment in their careers which enable them to learn Japanese Language and also the vocational training among others.

Looking ahead, I firmly believe that based on the trust and goodwill we have cultivated between two countries throughout 70 years will grow from strength to strength. I wish the Government and the People of Japan a continued success and good health in their future endeavors.

Major General Mahinda Hathurusinghe
Chairman
Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment



Message from Actg. President, JICA Alumni Association

In the 70 years of Japan-Sri Lanka diplomatic relations, the Japanese government has boosted economic development in our small nation. JICA and JBIC have funded projects such as the establishment of Sri Jayawardenapura hospital, and improving nationwide power generation through Kelanitissa Power station, and the Kotmale Hydroelectric Project.

Furthermore, Japan has enhanced Sri Lankan urban transport infrastructure, as demonstrated through the expansion of the Colombo Port, Kandy City, various railway and road development projects including the most recent venture, the Japan Sri Lanka Friendship Bridge in Kelaniya. These are but a few examples of the diplomatic efforts undertaken to ensure economic growth and sustainability. They are a testament to the strength of the relationship between the two nations, and

we look forward to witness the achievements of this development cooperation in coming years.

Chitral Jayawardene
Actg. President
JICA Alumni Association



Message from President of JLEA

It's with most sincere gratitude that the Japanese Language Education Association (JLEA) wishes the Japanese Embassy in Sri Lanka on their 70th anniversary of bilateral relations between Japan & Sri Lanka.

Since 1974, the Japanese language education had been provided to the Sri Lankans to pursue their higher education in Japan and to seeking employment opportunities in Sri Lanka and Japan.

JLEA, conducting several short-term and long-term Japanese language courses also taught the Japanese Culture, by organizing events such as the Annual Japanese Speech Contest, conducting the Japanese Language Proficiency Test and guided in teacher training programmes.

The JLEA Committee, the office staff & the members of the Faculty of Teachers wish the Embassy of Japan & its staff the very best in performing their service to Sri Lanka for many more years to come.

Dayasiri Warnakulasooriya
President
JLEA

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Application now open for the endorsement for events celebrating the anniversary year!

Visit the link below:

https://www.lk.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/index.html

https://www.lk.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_ja/index.html