



81st Auspicious Birthday of Japanese Emperor Akihito Celebrated

On December 8th 2014, Ambassador Ogawa hosted a reception at his residence to celebrate the 81st auspicious birthday of His Majesty Emperor Akihito.

Some 427 VVIP and VIP guests attended the reception, including the Rt. Hon'ble Vice-President Parmananda Jha as Chief Guest, and the Rt. Hon'ble Chairman of the Constituent Assembly, Mr. Subash Nemwang, Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs; Mahendra Bahadur Pandey; Finance; Ram Sharan Mahat; Information and Communication; Minendra Rijal; Urban Development; Narayan Khadka; Education; Chitra Lekha Yadav; Energy; Radha Gyawali; Youth and Sports; Purushottam Poudel; Commerce and Supplies; Sunil Bahadur Thapa; heads of Kathmandu-based diplomatic and other international organizations, and Members of the Constituent Assembly, as well as high ranking government officials.

During the ceremony, a traditional Japanese music group headed by Ms. Sayoko Kamiyama played magnificent music with on the koto and shakuhachi, traditional Japanese musical instruments.

In Japan, the Emperor is the symbol of the nation and the national unity, thus the birthday of His Majesty Emperor Akihito, December 23rd, is also celebrated as the National Day of Japan.



Musical performance by Japanese artists



Japan's Member of Parliament Visits Nepal

Hon'ble Mr. Yosuke Tsuruho, a Member of Parliament and Secretary-General of the Japan-Nepal Parliamentary Friendship League visited Nepal from November 1st -3rd. During his stay in Kathmandu, Mr. Tsuruho paid courtesy calls to Rt. Hon'ble President; Dr. Ram Baran Yadav, Rt. Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sushil Koirala; Hon'ble Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mahendra Bahadur Pandey; Hon'ble Minister for Finance, Ram Sharan Mahat, and had meetings with political leaders including Hon'ble Ram Chandra Poudel, exchanging views on bilateral cooperation and parliamentary exchanges.

The Government and people of Japan are always ready to assist Nepal's efforts in the democratization process. These types of visits will assist to further strengthen the friendly and cooperative relations between the two countries.



Member of Parliament Mr. Yosuke Tsuruho

Exchange of Bilateral Relations: Foreign Minister Pandey Visits Japan



Minister Pandey with Minister Kishida

On October 8th, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Fumio Kishida, held a Japan-Nepal Foreign Ministers' Meeting over dinner with his Nepalese counterpart Mahendra Bahadur Pandey, who was on a working visit to Japan upon the invitation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. An overview of the meeting is as follows:

Minister Kishida said that Japan and Nepal have maintained traditionally friendly relations since the establishment of diplomatic relations, and he stressed to further strengthen cooperation on policy matters as well. Touching upon the importance of the firm establishment of democracy in Nepal, Minister Kishida conveyed to Minister Pandey Japan's intention to continue to support Nepal's efforts. Furthermore, Minister

Kishida thanked Minister Pandey for visiting Hiroshima and offering flowers at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and said that he would cooperate with Nepal in the field of disarmament and nonproliferation.

In response, Minister Pandey expressed his gratitude for the invitation to visit Japan and said that this was the first time for him to visit Hiroshima, and he reaffirmed the importance of peace. He also said that his visit to Japan was meaningful because it allowed him to see Japan's outstanding science and technology. Minister Pandey explained that the Constituent Assembly members are now discussing the formulation of a new constitution, which will form the new foundation of the democracy and development of the nation.

With regard to Japan's cooperation with SAARC, Minister Kishida said that Japan attaches importance to Japan-SAARC cooperation, as shown by initiatives such as the holding of Japan-SAARC Energy Symposiums, and Japan hopes to further strengthen cooperation in this regard. Minister Pandey explained that the SAARC Summit, held in Nepal in November, would be an opportunity to discuss how regional integration can serve for the peace and prosperity of the region.

The two Ministers also exchanged views on regional affairs and the enhancement of cooperative relations in various fields such as disarmament and non-proliferation, disaster reduction and the United Nations Security Council Reform.

Ambassador Ogawa Confers Certificates of Appreciation 2014

On October 14th, Ambassador Ogawa conferred Certificates of Appreciation to three individuals and one organization who have worked for a long time to strengthen the relationship between Japan and Nepal. The Certificates were awarded to personalities and organizations that have supported the duties and responsibilities of Japan's diplomatic missions and who were deemed to have significantly supported the promotion of friendship and mutual understanding between Japan and other countries, specifically in the areas of international economics and technical cooperation, and the promotion of cultural activities and public relations.

The following are the recipients of the Certificate of Appreciation 2014:

1. Mr. Takashi MIYAHARA, Managing Director, Trans Himalayan Tours Pvt. Ltd.
2. Dr. Kenjiro NARATO, Chairman, NGO "Cross"
3. Dr. Basant PANT, Chairman, Annapurna Neurological Institute and Allied Sciences
4. Japanese Universities Alumni Association, Nepal (JUAAN)

Ambassador Ogawa expressed his confidence that the recipients' cooperation and incessant contributions will continue to play a significant role in strengthening the friendly and cordial relationship between Japan and Nepal, both at country-to-country and people-to-people levels.



Award winners with Ambassador Mr. Ogawa



Japan Provides Assistance for School Sector Reform Program



E/N Signing ceremony

The Government of Japan extended a grant assistance of 300 million yen (NRs.267,000,000) to Nepal for poverty reduction efforts exclusively intended for the School Sector Reform Program (SSRP). Two separate Notes were signed and exchanged on September 23rd between the Ambassador of Japan and the Finance Secretary on behalf of the Governments of Japan and Nepal.

Education is vital since it helps eradicate and fights against poverty. It is the foundation for economic and social development. It is expected that the outcome of the budgetary support extended by Japan to Nepal will help overcome various difficulties related to poverty alleviations and help Nepal realize its global commitments, for example, its commitments to the Millennium Development Goal for education.

As a friendly development partner, the Government of Japan has supported Nepal in its education sector for many decades under the grant aid scheme. The grant extended on September 23rd was for the construction of classrooms and other facilities. Altogether, about 9,000 classrooms were constructed with approximately eight billion Japanese yen. The Embassy of Japan has been working together with different NGOs and INGOs at the grassroots level as well.

At the signing ceremony, Ambassador Ogawa assured Japan’s continued support to the efforts of the Government of Nepal to accelerate the socio-economic development in Nepal. He further expressed his confidence that Japan’s support for development cooperation in Nepal would strengthen the existing friendly relations between Japan and Nepal.



Japan’s Assistance for the Project for Improving Livelihoods of Farmers through Environmentally Harmonizing Agriculture in the Hill Areas of Sindhuli District

Signing Ceremony: August 7th

Amount: Dollars 213,233 (equivalent to NRs. 20,811,540)

Recipient: GLM Institute

GLM Institute is an NGO based in Japan, working with Nepalese partner agency Srijansil Welfare Society to implement the Project for Improving Livelihoods of Farmers through Environmentally Harmonizing Agriculture in the Hill Areas of Sindhuli District.

Since August 2013, this two-year project has been improving the livelihood of around 600 farmers through environmentally harmonizing agriculture in Kuseswor Dumja VDC of Sindhuli District under Grant Assistance by the Japanese Government. This grant assistance will be used for the 2nd phase of this project. The major elements of the 2nd phase of this project are as follows:-

- (1) Establishment of the Collection & Information Center
- (2) Extension of fruit and vegetable cultivation skills
- (3) Extension of livestock raising and milk production skills
- (4) Extension of soil preservation skills
- (5) Establishment of micro-irrigation

This project is located in Sindhuli District, where the Government of Japan is currently assisting to construct the Sindhuli Road. The road will be an alternative new route which connects the capital city Kathmandu to the Terai through Sindhuli, making an easy access to a large market for the local farmers. Well-paved roads are vital necessities to development, and by implementing this project, we can expect, for the improvement in the livelihoods of the villagers and in the development of this region.



Cultivating a variety of vegetables



Livestock health camp

Vibration Japan: Harmony of Asian Music



The Embassy of Japan organized a concert - Vibration Japan: Harmony of Asian Music in Kathmandu on September 11th and 12th. The concert featured the Hibiki Band headed by Mr. Sou Inoue, together with other Japanese and Nepalese musicians.

The concert showcased traditional as well as contemporary Japanese and Nepalese music, which may be considered as a fusion of these two types of Asian sounds. The Japanese artists demonstrated performances of Japanese drum and flute which were accompanied by Rudra Band of Nepal with tabla, sarangi and bansuri.

There are many similarities in culture, especially in music and musical instruments, between Japan and Nepal. With no boundaries, music is an internationally common language, which fosters mutual understanding and respect among all peoples of the world. It is also one of the most effective ways of promoting cultural exchange at the people's level. More than 300 people attended the concert, which they greatly enjoyed. The performances were appreciated with sounds of applause from the audience at regular intervals.

AKI & KUNIKO Concert: Vivid Harmony of Guitar and Koto



In order to promote, in Nepal, Japanese traditional music in collaboration with modern music, the Embassy of Japan organized "AKI & KUNIKO Concert: Vivid Harmony of Guitar and Koto" in Kathmandu on December 5th and 6th. One of Japan's best guitar and the koto duo, AKI & KUNIKO, performed their musical art at the concert.

The AKI & KUNIKO unit was formed in 2001. The vivid harmony of two different kinds of stringed instrument has an unbelievably strong impact, creating an unworldly and fantastic sound. Their first album "HA" was released by Acoustic Music Records in Germany and has caused a sensation in many countries around the world. Following performances in Germany in April 2005, they started their tour of the Caribbean and Central America, Cuba, Costa Rica and the Dominican Republic. They made a firm imprint on the international scene captivating audiences with their impassioned performances.

The concerts in Kathmandu showcased the harmonizing melody from the Japanese traditional musical instrument koto and modernistic western music of guitar. The string music

played by two different musical instrument played against each other furiously in one moment, and changed to delicate, heartrending murmurs in the next catching the heart of the audiences.

The concert on December 5th was held at Shangri-la Hotel, whereas the concert on the 6th was held at the National Theater, Jamal.

On the 6th, Nepalese musician Mr. Santosh Bhakta Shrestha performed with AKI & KUNIKO on the Esraj, a traditional musical instrument from India. The vibration of music was enjoyed by an audience of more than 400; who certainly appreciated the performances.

With no boundaries, music is an internationally common language, which fosters mutual understanding and respect among all peoples of the world. It is also one of the most effective ways of promoting cultural exchange at the people's level. It is hoped that these types of occasions will help promote cultural ties between the people of the two countries, which will ultimately help in the expansion of an ever-growing friendly and cooperative relationship.

Nepal- Japan Academic Forum



Nepal Japan Academic Forum

Coinciding with its 40th anniversary, the Japanese Universities Alumni Association, Nepal (JUAAN) organized a one-day Japan-Nepal Academic Forum on September 6th at the Everest Hotel.

Two papers were presented: 1. Modernization and Development Discourse in Nepal – A Japanese Perspective, by Prof. Tatsuro Fujikura of Kyoto University. 2. School Education System for Human Resources Development in Japan, by Prof. Miki Sugimura of Sophia University.

The Chief Guest of the program was the Hon'ble Mr. Mahendra Bahadur Pandey, Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Guest of Honor was H.E. Mr. Masashi Ogawa, Ambassador of Japan. Addressing the Forum, Minister Pandey appreciated Japan's generous contribution to the various development programs of Nepal including higher education for Nepalese students in Japan. "The valuable knowledge and experiences that you have brought from Japan will contribute to the development of the country. At the same time it will also help enhance friendship and understanding between Nepal and

Japan," said the Ambassador of Japan. He continued, "education is the foundation for prosperity in Japan. Japan also experienced transition periods and instability in the past; but all were short. Team work, people's awareness and leadership played a vital role for progress in Japan." He further hoped the Forum and interaction among intellectuals would produce meaningful discourses.

Prof. Fujikura said that for people's participation and awareness it is necessary to address the needs of people. "Development involves new modes of living and doing things so that people might combine new ideas and also maintain old traditions. Development should be promoted so that people feel they are a member of a nation."

Prof. Sugimura said that Japan has a long history of education and the curriculum has been updated as the time demands. Reading, writing and calculation, the three basic useful skills, are included in the education system. She explained about the Japanese education system and curriculum, "it is also crucial to the government to educate people to make a national character for national integration," she said.

About 100 participants, including high government officials, academics, media persons and JUAAN members, attended the Forum. Japanese scholars doing research work in Nepal were also invited to the symposium. People who were not familiar with Japan said they learned many things about Japan through this Forum. Due to the shortage of time, interaction was short, however, the day-long interaction was lively.

Karaoke Competition in Kathmandu



On November 29th, 2014, the Japanese Language Teachers' Association, Nepal (JALTAN) and the Embassy of Japan jointly organized a Japanese karaoke competition at Rastriya Nach Ghar. Thirty five contestants participated in the program, which drew a wide range of participants from the general public and Japanese language learners.

The auditorium was filled with an atmosphere of energy, enthusiasm and anticipation, with all the participants managing to impress the audience with songs of their choice. The vast talent of the participants was incredible, and some participants dressed according to the theme of the song, while other group performances displayed creativity.

Ambassador Ogawa attended the event and commented on the impressive performances by the participants, expressing best wishes to their future efforts to master the Japanese language and the art of karaoke.

The competition was jointly supported by JICA Nepal Office; the Japanese Association in Nepal; the Japanese Universities Alumni Association Nepal (JUAAN); JICA Alumni Association of Nepal (JAAN), and the Nepal AOTS Alumni Society (NAAS).

Ms. Pramila Rai (Campus of International Languages, T.U.), Mr. Sumit Lama (JLECC), and Mr. Anjal Lama (Peaceful Educational Foundation) stood first, second and third respectively.

Japanese Language Proficiency Test



On December 7th, 2014, the JLPT was held in St. Mary's School in which a total of 947 students appeared in the test levels N1 to N5. The Japan Foundation conducts the JLPT on the first Sunday of July and December every year, both inside Japan and in more than 60 countries around the world.

In Nepal, the Embassy of Japan, in cooperation with the Japanese Language Teachers' Association, Nepal (JALTAN), conducts the JLPT.

On Japan: World Assembly for Women in Tokyo: WAW! Tokyo 2014



1. Introduction

The World Assembly for Women in Tokyo (WAW!, Tokyo 2014) was held in Tokyo on September 12th and 13th. The event was jointly hosted by four organizations, namely, the Government of Japan, KEIDANREN (Japan Business Federation), Nikkei Inc., and the Japan Institute of International Affairs. Additionally, it was supported by the Japan Center for Economic Research. This event is one of the efforts to achieve 'A Society where Women Shine', one of the main issues of Abe Administration.

Participants in this symposium included top leaders in the field of women's issues from Japan and abroad, such as Ms. Christine Lagarde, the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). They discussed how to promote women's active roles in Japan and the world.

2. September 12th, "Open Forum"

On the afternoon of September 12th, an Open Forum was held at KEIDANREN (Japan Business Federation) Kaikan. Prime Minister Abe, Mrs. Akie Abe (the spouse of the Prime Minister of Japan), Foreign Minister Kishida and others participated in the event.

3. September 13th, "High-Level Round Table"

A High-Level Round Table was held on September 13th at Roppongi Hills. Prime Minister Abe, Mrs. Akie Abe, Minister Arimura, Minister of State for Gender Equity, and in charge of Promoting Women's Active Participation, participated in the event. Foreign Minister Kishida took the role of chairperson.

4. Shine Weeks

The period from before and after the symposium, basically from September 8th to 19th, was positioned as 'Shine Weeks' and a series of women-related events were held by groups including relevant government ministries and agencies, local governments, citizen groups, schools, and student organizations. These events included symposiums, seminars, movie screenings, performances and events for food, tourism and other aspects of Japanese culture. It is hoped that these events will generate a movement for 'A Society where Women Shine' across all Japan.

For more information, please visit:

http://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/hr_ha/page22e_000456.html

<http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/women/index.html>

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