

# **PRESS RELEASE**

**Embassy of Japan**

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## **Ambassadorial Certificates of Appreciation Conferred by H.E. Ambassador Masashi OGAWA to Japanese and Nepalese Individuals and Organizations**

His Excellency Mr. Masashi Ogawa, Ambassador of Japan to Nepal, during a function held today at his Official Residence, conferred Ambassadorial Certificates of Appreciation to eight individuals and one organization who have worked for a considerable period of time to strengthen the relationship between Japan and Nepal.

Those who received a Certificate of Appreciation at today's ceremony were:

1. Nepal Chamber of Commerce (NCC);
2. Ms. Archana Pradhan, Senior Manager, Patient Care Services Department, Grande International Hospital;
3. Ms. Chie Shrestha, Owner, Cafe and Restaurant U;
4. Ms. Masako Yamane, KAI Therapist, Rural Health Education and Service Center;
5. Ms. Hiroko Iimori, Owner, Hotel Sunset View;
6. Dr. Nobuo (Tokushin) Kasai, Chairman, Lumbini Hotel Kasai;
7. Mr. Kazuo Suganuma, President, the Japanese Association in Nepal;
8. Ms. Midori Sakamoto, Japanese Language Teacher & Advisor, the Japanese Language Teachers' Association Nepal, and
9. Mr. Yoji Matsuda, President, Megane no Matsuda Co., Ltd.

Speaking on the occasion, Ambassador OGAWA expressed his confidence that the recipients' ongoing contributions and cooperation will continue to play a significant role in enhancing the friendly and cordial ties between the two countries.

NOTE: Ambassadorial Certificates of Appreciation can be awarded to any individual and organization, in a variety of capacities, who have contributed to the activities of Japan's Diplomatic Missions. By conferring these certificates, the Ambassador thanks them for their efforts in such important fields as economic or technical cooperation, cultural activities, public relations, and the promotion of friendship and mutual understanding between Japan and the receiving country.

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## The recipients in brief:

### 1. Nepal Chamber of Commerce (NCC)

NCC, a prestigious business fraternity in Nepal, has been instrumental in strengthening the economic and friendly relationship between Japan and Nepal through various activities including the Nepal Chamber Expo 2016, which commemorated the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations, and active interactions with visiting Japanese businesspersons.

### 2. Ms. Archana Pradhan

An h-MBA from International University of Health and Welfare (Japan), Ms. Pradhan's efforts to improve quality medical services in Grande International Hospital, a renowned international hospital in Kathmandu, has been highly recognized. Ms. Pradhan has also been assisting the Japanese residents and tourists visiting Grande International Hospital as an interlocutor or medical interpreter for Nepali medical professionals.

### 3. Ms. Chie Shrestha

The manager and the owner of "Cafe and Restaurant U" since 2003, Ms. Shrestha's contribution to the promotion of Japanese cuisine, a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage, in Nepal is widely known. Ms. Shrestha's roles as a committee member and an instructor of the Supplementary Japanese Language School in Kathmandu for the last 14 years clearly show her outstanding commitment to the Japanese community.

### 4. Ms. Masako Yamane

A seasoned nurse educated and trained in Japan, Ms. Yamane, 80, decided to start her medical volunteer activities in 1983 to provide health services with Nepali citizens who have no access to proper medical care due to financial reasons. It was in 1986 when Ms. Yamane founded Rural Health Education and Service Center (RHESC), to intensify her medical volunteer activities. A winner of multiple prizes since 1980's and a tireless social contributor, Ms. Yamane founded RHESC Acupuncture College to train Nepali acupuncture practitioners.

### 5. Ms. Hiroko Iimori

A resident in Nepal since 1978, Ms. Iimori, 73, opened Hotel Sunset View in 1991, which now is one of Kathmandu's most popular hotels. Married to a Thakali, Ms. Iimori offers, in her hotel, Japanese style noodles, or "Soba", made of buckwheat flour produced in Mustang. Adding to her contribution to the promotion of the Japanese cuisine in Nepal, Ms. Iimori also helped Japanese residents facing difficulties after the Gorka earthquake in April 2015.

### 6. Dr. Nobuo(Tokushin) Kasai

Dr. Kasai, 72, started his philanthropic acts for Nepal in 2006 by offering free meals to pilgrimage headed for Lumbini. Adding to this, Dr. Kasai built Lumbini Hotel Kasai, a Japanese style hotel in the Lumbini Develop Trust area, in 2009, which has given shelter to countless pilgrims. An outstanding benefactor, a generous financial donor to UNESCO and Lumbini Develop Trust and a winner of multiple Nepali prizes, Dr. Kasai stands tall as a successful Japanese businessperson whose contribution to the promotion of the Japan-Nepal friendship will never be forgotten.

### 7. Mr. Kazuo Suganuma

Currently being Consultant, Monta Dio Consulting Japan, Mr. Suganuma's professional career started when he conducted an agricultural research and field work in an eastern Nepal's mountainous village in 1972, as a graduate student of a

Japanese university. Since then, Mr. Suganuma worked with Nepalis mainly as a development professional of Nihon Koei Co. Ltd. A respected long-term Japanese resident in Nepal, Mr. Suganuma served twice as the President of the Japanese Association in Nepal, founded the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in 2004, and are now revitalizing the Chamber. Mr. Suganuma's role in the socio-economic development of Nepal and his commitment to the Japanese community is widely admired.

8. Ms. Midori Sakamoto

A Hiroshima native, Ms. Sakamoto, 68, started her career as a professional Japanese language instructor in 1996 in Patan. Committed to the promotion of mutual understanding via the Japanese language education, Ms. Sakamoto played a key role in establishing the Japanese Language Teachers' Association in Nepal, or JALTAN, in 1998, has been instrumental in having successfully organized JALTAN's annual events such as speech contests for years, and has been rigorously educating students in Tribuvan University and other Nepali leaders on Japanese culture.

9. Mr. Yoji Matsuda

It was in 1993 when Mr. Matsuda, President of 'Megane no Matsuda Co. Ltd.', an optical firm in Iwate prefecture of Japan, aged 66, was seduced by Nepal for the first time and it was in 1998 when he made his 22<sup>nd</sup> visit to Nepal and started the first eye camp where free ophthalmological examinations were provided to unprivileged Nepali citizens. By the time Mr. Matsuda has made his 59<sup>th</sup> visit to Nepal this year, his accumulated philanthropic contribution to Nepal amounted to free ophthalmological examinations for 7,742 persons, free provision of 4,835 pairs of glasses, donation of 4,835 pencils, and free supply of 18 wheelchairs. Mr. Matsuda's exceptional acts are deeply thanked by the recipients and recognized to have improved the medical environment for the poor in Nepal's rural areas, thus further cementing the ties between Japan and Nepal.