



20th Anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor's Accession to the Throne

ON 7 January 1989, upon the demise of Emperor Hirohito (posthumously Emperor Showa), His Majesty Emperor Akihito acceded to the throne as the 125th Emperor of Japan. The Ceremony of Enthronement was held at the Imperial Palace on 12 November 1990. From abroad, representatives of 158 countries, including monarchs, heads of state, and the heads of two international organizations attended the ceremony.

January 7 of this year marked the 20th anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor's Accession to the Throne. The ministries and agencies concerned, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, planned to organize various events to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor's

Accession to the Throne.

We would like to take this opportunity to introduce activities carried out by the Imperial Family to foster friendly relations with foreign countries.

The Imperial Family, including His Majesty the Emperor, facilitates the fostering of good relations on an international level through visits to other countries and by receiving foreign monarchs and presidents.

They also receive other foreign dignitaries or leading figures from abroad, exchange correspondence and telegrams with foreign heads of state, dispatch representatives to foreign countries on the occasion of celebration or sorrow, and receive diplomatic missions residing in Japan.

MESSAGE

ON behalf of the "Japanese Universities Alumni Association in Bangladesh (JUAAB)", I would like to extend heartfelt felicitations and congratulations to His Majesty Emperor Akihito of Japan on the auspicious occasion of his 76th birthday which also coincides with the 20th anniversary of his accession to the throne and the 50th anniversary of his happy wedding with Empress Michiko.

We do have the very fond memory of their majesties' short visit to Bangladesh in 1975 as Crown Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko. At that time, my wife had the rare opportunity of having an audience (as a mem-

ber of the Japanese community in Bangladesh) with their majesties. After long 29 years, my wife and I had again the golden opportunity to have an audience with His Majesty Emperor Akihito on 3rd November, 2004 at the imperial palace in Tokyo when I was decorated with the "Order of the Rising Sun - Gold & Silver Rays" by the Govt. of Japan. Both of these occasions will be remembered and cherished by us forever.

We are told that whenever a Prime Minister of Bangladesh made a courtesy call on His Majesty Emperor Akihito, he was very kind and sympathetic to the people of this country. His Majesty's true feeling for Bangladesh was indeed reflected

in the very friendly actions of the Govt. of Japan during the last three decades as a dynamic development partner of this country.

The contribution of Japan for human resources development in many countries including Bangladesh deserves special appreciation. So far, more than 3000 people from Bangladesh received higher education in Japan and another 3000 received short-term training in different areas of national importance. The returned alumni of Japan have already established different alumni associations including JUAAB in order to promote and strengthen the bond of friendship between Bangladesh and Japan through a wide range of

activities. These alumni societies may be considered as permanent bridges between our two countries.

During the recent past, academic and research linkages have been established between several Universities of Japan and Bangladesh. The members of JUAAB sincerely expect that the number of such linkages along with exchange of experts should increase significantly during the days to come.

Let me now stop here by saying "Long Live Bangladesh and Japan" and "Long Live Bangladesh-Japan Friendship"!

Prof. Dr. AKM Moazzem Hussain
President, JUAAB

Hokkaido, the land of the pure nature



HOKKAIDO is easy to spot in the map of Japan: Among the four major islands that create the Japanese archipelago, Hokkaido is located the northern most. This diamond-shaped island has a different geography from the rest of the country. While most of Japan is characterized with highly industrialized urban cities with dense population and hilly coastlines, Hokkaido is tremendously open and has a reminiscence of the vast North American geography. With serene rich nature and open land, Hokkaido serves both

to agriculture and tourism.

Harsh winter makes Hokkaido the winter sports heaven: With the superior quality of dry powder snow and the open geography, Hokkaido is the best ski regions in Asia, and as proved with the Winter Olympic Games in Sapporo in 1972, Hokkaido's resort development has been very successful and recognized as the top quality in the world.

Surrounded by different cold currents from the Pacific Ocean, Okhotsk Sea and the Sea of Japan, Hokkaido produces nearly one quarter of the national

seafood catch, and significantly contributes to the country's culinary industry that traditionally requires high quality fresh seafood. Taking advantage of the flat and wide landscape, Hokkaido establishes the breadbasket of Japan: The wide prairie and the cooler climate are recognized as perfect for forestry, rice, vegetable and dairy farming. Forestry in particular, takes almost half of the entire area of Hokkaido, and is what makes Hokkaido so rich in

Lake Toya



wild life and virgin nature.

In the world's spotlight
Shiretoko: This small peninsula in the eastern Hokkaido that extends into the Okhotsk Sea is the great example of how Hokkaido maintains the great nature and the comfortable human life. Shiretoko Peninsula is covered with untouched forest, and along with the precipitous coastline and the volcanic central area, this is the home of varieties

Culture in Hokkaido

Summer Festivals: Because of the long, dark and harsh winter, people in Hokkaido enjoy the short summer with festivities. Just around the time of this year's G8 Summit, Hokkaido is busy with festivals all over region.

Lake Toya is the venue of spectacular fireworks from April through October, which illuminate the quiet glassy water surface of Lake Toya every night.

Furano, the large ski resort area that is becoming larger with tourist from overseas in recent years, is also the large destinations for several summer festivals. Furano's mountains, which serve as the world class ski areas in winter, are the major camping and hiking venues for outdoorsy adventurers from all over the world. Mt. Furanodake open for the summer hiking courses in the early June, and provide



Summer Festivals

shuttle bus service to hikers between the nearest train station and the trailhead of the mountains.

Furano's large flower fields are also the major attraction in summer: The region's largest festival is at the lavender farms in Kami-Furano (Upper Furano), starting late July with the lavender fields stretching all the way to the horizon. Hokkaido's typical idyllic scenic route also runs through Furano.

Along the Route 237 are the continuous flower farms and the fields of different colors continue as you drive. The yellow of sunflowers shines against the pure blue sky in summer.

Equestrian Culture: Horses were brought to Hokkaido during the development era by the Japanese explores in the late 19th century. Introduced for the agricultural development in

Hokkaido, horses have been taking major roles in people's life, and a unique horse race has been born in Hokkaido, the largest thoroughbred country in Japan.

Banei Horse Racing is the 200 meter race of the draft horses that are double sized as normal thoroughbreds, pulling an iron sled. To compete not only in speed but also in power and endurance of horses, the ground has a few humps. The beauty of Banei Horse Racing is the proximity to the horses on the track: Since horses run slower pulling an iron sled, people cheer up the horse right by the race tracks. This shows the origin of Banei Horse Racing that came from the very severe conditions in Hokkaido around the 1900, when pioneers started settling down in Hokkaido. The vast open land of Hokkaido later

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Our Heartiest Felicitations to His Majesty Emperor AKIHITO on the occasion of his 76th Birthday



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of migrant birds and marine species, some of whom are classified as endangered. Because of the rich natural habitats, Shiretoko has a perfect natural food chain among them, which is becoming rarer in the recent years. Yet, Shiretoko is the home of several fishing villages and this peninsula accomplishes the perfect cohabitation of human and natural lives.

For the successful human and natural cohabitation, Shiretoko Peninsula has become UNESCO's World Natural Heritage Site in 2005, and since then the Peninsula has been working on the environmental maintenance such as garbage removal and regulating the eco tourism.

Lake Toya: Respecting this tremendous nature and the extensive effort to maintain the environment, the annual summit meeting of the Group of Eight (G8 Summit) selected Hokkaido for the 2008 meeting. At the beautiful summer lakeshore of Lake Toya, the national leaders from the eight advanced nations gather for global issue, and with the particular focus on the recent global climate changes as the major topics, the Summit picked this beautiful lakeshore site for the 2008 meeting because of the untouched natural beauty of Lake Toya in southwestern Hokkaido.

The lake is formed by the volcanic crater, and among several lakes in Hokkaido, Lake Toya is known for the lake that doesn't freeze during the harsh Arctic winter weather because of its 590 feet depth. Not to mention scattering hot spring spots around the Lake, the magnificent view of the volcanic mountain both in the blue sky and of the reflection in the water are breathtaking, representing Hokkaido's rich landscape.

To introduce the local culture and nature to the G8 Summit visitors, Japan National Tourist Organization opens the Japan information booth during the Meetings.

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