

125th anniversary

the japan times

On the occasion of our 125th anniversary

The Japan Times, in commemorating its 125th anniversary on this special page, expresses gratitude for the consistent support and encouragement it has received from its diverse stakeholders, including readers, over the years.

This paper was established as Japan's first English-language newspaper with a purpose of bringing Japanese and non-Japanese people together in closer union through interpretation of Japan and Japanese things. For a century and a quarter, The Japan Times has faithfully followed this objective and grown to not only unite people but also to think together with the general public what can be done to make the world more sustainable in every respect.

We once again take this opportunity to thank everyone, and will continue our efforts to be a reliable source of information in the belief that acquiring knowledge and insights can open doors to solving many of the pressing concerns that the world is facing.

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Kishida: New world turning point

FUMIO KISHIDA
PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN



On the occasion of the 125th anniversary of The Japan Times, with so many people gathered for its celebration, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to The Japan Times' chairperson and publisher, Minako Suematsu, and all the stakeholders.

I hear that The Japan Times was established in March 1897. At the time, our country was at a major turning point. Japan was struggling to form a new system to protect its independence in a harsh international environment while learning a great deal from Western countries and reinforcing its foundations as a modern nation.

I would like to offer my renewed respect for the timely and visionary endeavor of launching the first English newspaper published by Japanese with the significant goals of letting the world know how things really are in Japan and promoting mutual understanding.

It is easy to imagine that The Japan Times' dissemination of information to the rest of the world contributed significantly to the creation of the new Japan.

Today, we face yet another important turning point. We are witnessing a rush of events that will go down in history, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the Russian invasion of Ukraine. In addition, no time should be wasted in tackling political challenges such as achieving sustainability of the economy and society. No country can overcome these difficult issues and challenges alone.

Now that we are facing various hardships, we should learn much from the attitude of our predecessors who sought a better future through opening the nation

and connecting with the world.

To do this, it is indispensable for nations to correctly understand each other — this, I believe, has not changed since so many years ago.

One of my jobs is to do my best in communicating Japan's situation to the world from the vantage point of the Japanese government.

I sincerely hope that The Japan Times continues to pursue the difficult mission of showing the real Japan to the world, preserving the philosophy and ideas inherited from the time of its establishment.

I believe that each effort we make will help nurture mutual understanding with other countries and increase the strength of Japan and the world in paving the way for a new era even in the face of various challenges.

You can read Prime Minister Fumio Kishida's speech by scanning the QR code at the bottom of this page.

Hayashi: 'Seeing beyond differences'

MAIKO MURAOKA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Foreign Minister Yoshimasa Hayashi, who attended this commemorative event, gave a congratulatory speech in English and celebrated the history of The Japan Times, which extends across three centuries from the 19th century to

the 21st century.

He said, "There must have been hard times for the media industry, but the newspaper is still going forward" and touched on the BeyondVS campaign. The Japan Times' new concept to advocate the importance of seeing beyond differences and divisions.

He went on to say that its long history and continuous efforts "prove that The Japan Times is really the independent voice in Asia," referring to the newspaper's motto, "The Independent Voice in Asia."

This had been mentioned in the opening remarks given by the newspaper's publisher and chairperson, Minako Suematsu, who said the motto was revised in March 2021 to reflect The Japan Times' position as an independent news organization based in one of the leading democracies in Asia.

Hayashi expressed his strong hope that The Japan Times will play a larger role beyond being a voice in Asia and enhance its presence in the global community in the coming years.

A voice for the world

MAIKO MURAOKA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Having known chairperson and publisher Minako Suematsu since her childhood, Yoichi Miyazawa, a politician from the Liberal Democratic Party and a member of the House of Councilors, said, "I am so delighted that such an elaborate ceremony is being held for this anniversary as if it were my own. 125 years is an important milestone and it should be celebrated."

Miyazawa, whose uncle is former Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and who has been involved in politics since he was young, is a distant relative of Suematsu and had gathered from conversations with her that The Japan Times had gone through some hardships in recent years due to changes in socioeconomic situations. "But it is only a very short time compared to its history of 125 years," he said.

He also assured the audience that Suematsu will fully exercise her leadership to help overcome the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. "I believe that The Japan Times will be a voice that represents not only Asia but also the world," he said in concluding his congratulatory speech.

Importance of independence

MAIKO MURAOKA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Ichiro Fujisaki, a former ambassador of Japan to the United States, emphasized the increasing importance of independent news sources like The Japan Times in his congratulatory speech.

"The prime minister and foreign minister made a speech here today, but they have been flying around the world. When they are in Japan, they are receiving guests, leaders from all over the world,

every week," he said, pointing out that the frequency is extraordinary. "This is because now everyone in the world would like to know how Japan is thinking and what Japan is doing," Fujisaki said, adding that the role of independent media is even more important in a time like this.

"There are media who are just echoing the government's view, [or] who are just trying to be critical. I think that The Japan Times is neither of those," he said, and supported the position of The Japan Times to show the world that Japanese society is free, open and democratic. He encouraged The Japan Times to continue pursuing its path for the sake of Japan and the world.

Paper 'living legend': journalist

MAIKO MURAOKA
CONTRIBUTING WRITER



Yoichi Funabashi, a distinguished Japanese journalist, columnist and author as well as co-founder and chairman of the Asia Pacific Initiative (API), congratulated

The Japan Times on its anniversary by calling it a "living legend" with a history of having been established and supported by liberal internationalists including Hirobumi Ito, Japan's first prime minister, and Yukichi Fukuzawa, a highly influential thinker, edu-

cator and author in the Meiji Era.

He looked back on his college days, when he started reading The Japan Times to aid his understanding of American radio broadcasts on the Vietnam War. "I've been an avid reader ever since," he said, but he is not just a reader — API publishes its insights on geoeconomics in the paper weekly.

He also touched on Japan's responsibility "to help support and maintain the liberal international order as a country with a long history of centering democratic values" amid the perilous global situation, and concluded his celebratory statement by saying, "The Japan Times serves as a reminder and advocate of our liberal ideas and values that we will continue to cherish."

125th anniversary party in photos



A toast led by James Kondo, chairman of The International House of Japan. The guests were able to enjoy premium sake donated by Makoto Kambara, president of the Tsuneishi Group.



The New York Times' Hidemasa Noguchi (left) and Joshua Peller (right) with Japan Times Editor-in-Chief Takashi Yokota



Mito Kakizawa (left), a member of the House of Representatives, and Jimyo Domaie, chief abbot of the Eigenji temple, pose with donated Japanese calligraphy.



Ambassador of Tunisia Mohamed Elloumi (left) and Ambassador of Rwanda Ernest Rwamucyo



From left: BS-TBS Andrew Niwatamori; Akinori Kanayama and News2u Holdings Yoichiro Yoshizaki



Current and former employees of The Japan Times



Nomura Holdings' Ross Rowbury and Marybeth Boller, Caroline Kennedy's former chief



Lower House lawmaker Keisuke Suzuki



Lower House lawmaker Fumiaki Kobayashi



Part of the team of employees, board members and directors of The Japan Times closing the ceremony commemorating the milestone achieved



Above and above right: Attendees look at the exhibit about the history of The Japan Times.



Japan Times Deputy Managing Editor Mark Thompson (left) and SCCJ President Andre Zimmermann



From left: Alison Beale, head of Oxford University's Japan office, inbound tourism consultant Jay Jarman Walsh and Fabrik CEO James Hollow



Guests listen to one of the speeches and congratulatory messages.



From left: Ambassador of Ukraine Sergiy Korsunsky, Ambassador of Croatia Drazen Hrstic and Ambassador of Colombia Santiago Pardo



For more pictures and memories about the 125th anniversary celebration, please scan the QR code
Photos: Hiromichi Matono