

Independence Day of Philippines

Publicity

Philippines appreciates Japan's steadfast support

By Jose C. Laurel V
Ambassador of the Philippines

I wish to send my warmest greetings to our countrymen and Japanese friends on the occasion of the 123rd anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence.

On June 12, we again commemorate this historic event and important milestone in Philippine history, in which, for the first time, the Philippine flag — rising from the courageous sacrifices of our heroes in their fight to achieve our country's independence — was raised as the country's national anthem played publicly at Kawit, Cavite.



Jose C. Laurel V

In the same way, today, we are battling the COVID-19 pandemic that has affected the whole world. But in the midst of this crisis shines the bravery exemplified by our frontline workers, who, at times, have put their lives on the line as they deliver much-needed assistance to the public during this pandemic. We extend our great ap-

preciation to all the frontline workers for their patience and unremitting commitment to service.

In the hospitality shown by the government of Japan to the about 300,000 Filipinos, one of the largest Filipino communities in Asia, we see our very strong relationship symbolized. Even with the COVID-19 situation affecting the country, the care and support from the government and the Japanese people have helped ease the burden for Filipinos studying, working and living in Japan.

This is but one of the outstanding instances of steadfast Japanese support for the Philippines exhibited over many decades. It is the kind of partnership that has contributed to the prosperity, not only of our country, but of the wider Southeast Asian region as well. Our strong bilateral ties with Japan are evident in our deep and groundbreaking cooperation across almost all sectors of the economy, human resource development, politics, defense, maritime domain awareness, science and technology cooperation and the Mindanao peace process. The continuation of high-level engagements amid the pandemic is an affirmation of our shared values and our common goals of recovery and revival for the two

countries, as well as for the wider world.

This year 2021, we commemorate the 65th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Japan and the 10th year of the Bilateral Strategic Partnership of the two countries. President Rodrigo Duterte and Japanese Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga recently reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen bilateral ties by building on the milestones reached this year in Philippines-Japan relations.

President Duterte called for "greater solidarity" from the global community, especially as countries work to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Similarly, for this year's celebration, the National Historical Commission of the Philippines gave the theme "*Kalayaan 2021: Diwang Kalayaan sa Pagkakaisa at Paghilom ng Bayan*" or Spirit of Freedom in Unity and National Healing. It is through our concerted efforts that we can face the challenges resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic. The development of vaccines, now available worldwide, is a beacon of hope on the path toward healing and recovery.

Mabuhay tayong lahat!



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President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, left, joins his fellow leaders from the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) member countries in the virtual 27th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting at the Malacañang Palace on Nov. 20, 2020.

Kami'y nagbibigay-pugay sa ating mga kabayan ngayong Araw ng Kalayaan.

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of the Philippines
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the 123rd Anniversary of
Their Independence

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There is no struggle that the Bayanihan spirit cannot overcome.
A hopeful Independence Day to everyone.

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