

フィリピン・スター紙 （４月２９日付け 朝刊 １面、７面）
（石破総理寄稿文掲載）

Towards deepening Japan-Phl strategic partnership

By **ISHIBA SHIGERU**
Prime Minister of Japan

Warm greetings to the people of the Philippines. I am Ishiba Shigeru, Prime Minister of Japan, and I am truly delighted to be visiting your country.

Japan and the Philippines are bound by deep

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historical ties. Trade began in the 16th century, and Japanese communities established themselves in Manila. Before the Second World War, many Japanese immigrants settled mainly in Baguio and Davao, shaping local communities. Although there were difficult times in the past between Japan and the Philippines, President Quirino granted a pardon to Japanese war criminals and in 1953 declared, "I am doing this because I do not want my children and my people to inherit from me hate for people who might yet be our friends for the permanent interest of the country." This spirit of generosity greatly contributed to the normalization of diplomatic relations between our two countries. Since then, Japan and the Philippines have built trust and friendship. Today, our relationship is one that pursues peace and prosperity with a future-oriented perspective, and our cooperation is wide-ranging. Furthermore, our two countries will mark the 70th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations next year.

As maritime nations bound by fundamental values and strategic interests, Japan and the Philippines are key partners who collaborate not only in bilateral relations but also on regional and global issues. Given the international community's increasing division and confrontation, cooperation between Japan and the Philippines is more important than ever in realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific. In light of this, I hope to further develop the relationship between Japan and the Philippines, which is bound by a special bond of friendship, through this visit.

In recent years, under the leadership of President Marcos, bilateral engagement between Japan and the Philippines, as well as multilateral security cooperation including with the United States, has been rapidly progressing. In January, a Japan-Philippines-US Leaders' Video Conference was held, and in the same month, Foreign Minister Iwata Takeshi visited the Philippines, followed by Defense Minister Nakatani Gen in February. Both countries have continued to maintain close communication.

In addition to joint efforts towards the conclusion of the Japan-Philippines Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), Japan is advancing multi-layered security and maritime cooperation with the Philippines. This includes the delivery of air surveillance radars as Japan's first transfer of finished defense equipment, the provision of coastal surveillance radars through Official Security Assistance (OSA), maritime safety capacity building, various joint exercises including maritime cooperative activities involving the Philippines and multiple other countries, defense exchanges and maritime law enforcement capacity building support, such as the provision of patrol vessels through Official Development Assistance (ODA). Japan remains committed to strengthening these efforts.

Economic cooperation between Japan and the Philippines is advancing steadily across various sectors. As the Philippines' largest donor, Japan has contributed to the country's economic development and the reduction of inequality, by leveraging its strengths through large-scale transportation infrastructure such as the North-South Commuter Railway Project and socio-economic support in Mindanao.

In the field of disaster prevention, which has become my life's work, Japan is promoting cooperation through the development of flood control and early warning systems, drawing on its experience and knowledge. Furthermore, collaboration is also underway on climate change and energy, with an emphasis on sustainable development and resilience building. There are approximately 1,600 Japanese companies operating in the Philippines, and in recent years, startups have been addressing social issues, particularly in the medical and educational fields. Japan will continue to strongly support the Philippines in achieving upper middle-income country status through social and economic development, utilizing its expertise in key sectors.

Japan and the Philippines have built a strong relationship, with the foundation of that bond rooted in cultural and people-to-people exchanges. The number of Filipinos visiting Japan reached a record high of approximately 820,000 in 2024. There are around 340,000 Filipinos living in Japan, contributing to various sectors such as nursing, caregiving, construction, shipbuilding and agriculture, and playing a vital role in supporting Japan's economy and daily life. In sports, many athletes with ties to both countries are active, and sports exchanges continue to thrive. It is still fresh in our memories how both nations rejoiced when gymnast Carlos Yulo, who has trained in Japan for many years, won two gold medals at the Paris 2024 Olympics. Moreover, Japanese anime and manga are popular in the Philippines, and cultural exchange is also progressing, as seen in the live-action adaptation of anime by Filipino actors. Japan will continue to deepen mutual understanding and promote friendly relations between our two countries through cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

With the increasingly severe security environment in the region, the relationship with the United States, an ally of both our countries, is becoming even more important. Trilateral cooperation is progressing significantly and concretely in areas such as maritime security, responses to economic coercion and strengthening of critical infrastructure resilience. Japan will maintain and further build on this momentum, working together to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law.

The Osaka-Kansai Expo opened on April 13th. Under the theme "Designing Future Society for Our Lives," the Philippines is presenting a pavilion titled "Nature, Culture & Community - Woven Together for a Better Future." I hope the Expo will serve as an opportunity not only to deepen people-to-people and economic exchanges between Japan and the Philippines, but also to allow visitors to explore the attractions of various regions of Japan.

To conclude, I extend my heartfelt wishes for the happiness and well-being of the Filipino people and for the continued strengthening of the bonds of friendship that unite our nations.

フィリピン・デイリー・インクワイアラー紙（4月29日付け 朝刊 1面、3面）
（石破総理寄稿文掲載）



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Shigeru Ishiba
—CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS



CALL AMONG ALLIES The Japanese leader holds a video call on Jan. 12 with President Marcos and then US President Joe Biden.



EXPO ATTRACTION Japan Airlines brings to Manila the mascot Myaku-Myaku of Expo 2025. The Philippines has a pavilion at the ongoing fair in Osaka, Japan.

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many athletes with ties to both countries are active, and sports exchanges continue to thrive. It is still fresh in our memories how both nations rejoiced when gymnast Carlos Yulo, who has trained in Japan for many years, won two gold medals at the Paris 2024 Olympics. Moreover, Japanese anime and manga are popular in the Philippines, and cultural exchange is also progressing, as seen in the live-action adaptation of anime by Filipino actors. Japan will continue to deepen mutual understanding and promote friendly relations between our two countries through cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

With the increasingly severe security environment in the region, the relationship with the United States, an ally of both our countries, is becoming even more important. Trilateral cooperation is progressing significantly and concretely in areas such as maritime security, responses to economic coercion, and strengthening of critical infrastructure resilience. Japan will maintain and further build on this momentum, working together to realize a free and open Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law.

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To conclude, I extend my heartfelt wishes for the happiness and well-being of the Filipino people, and for the continued strengthening of the bonds of friendship that unite our nations.

マニラ・ブレティン紙（4月29日付け 朝刊 5面）
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