

Embassy of Japan in Israel
Newsletter July 2013

Dear friends & colleagues,

We are pleased to send you the 48th Economic Newsletter. This month we would like to highlight the successful visit of Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida to Israel, which took place from July 24th to 25th.

Through his meetings with the political leaders of Israel, both countries reaffirmed their commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations in broader areas of mutual interest towards the next 60 years of friendship.

Main achievements of the visit:

1. The Corridor for Peace and Prosperity

Japan launched a unique development initiative in Jericho in 2006 at the time of the then Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's visit to the region with the hope to help build a sustainable economy for the Palestinians through regional cooperation and confidence-building among the parties concerned. Japan, Israel, Palestine and Jordan have been working together to implement the flagship project of the initiative called "Jericho Agri-industrial Park" (JAIP). During his visit to Jericho, Minister Kishida chaired a Ministerial Four-Party Consultative Meeting with the participation of relevant ministers for the first time in five years. Given the positive atmosphere after Secretary Kerry's announcement for the resumption of peace negotiations, the event in Jericho drew much attention from the media as well where the four ministers reaffirmed their commitment to expedite the implementation of the project.

2. Bilateral Economic Relations

In his meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, it was agreed to reinforce our efforts to further strengthen our bilateral ties, in particular in the areas where both countries are well advanced including science and technology, space technology and agriculture. Both sides also agreed to deepen their dialogue covering a variety of subjects such as cultural exchanges, security and international law.

3. Middle East Peace

The visit took place at a most opportune timing when expectations were growing for the resumption of peace talks between Israel and Palestine. Minister Kishida encouraged both sides to make their best efforts to reach an agreement, and underlined Japan's willingness to provide every support, political and economic, to both parties.

Embassy of Japan Economic Section

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The Japanese Economy

Monthly economic report – Cabinet Office

The Japanese economy is picking up steadily and shows some movements on the way to recovery.

* Exports show movements of picking up. Industrial production is increasing at a moderate pace.

* Corporate profits are improving, mainly among manufacturers. Business investment is leveling off and shows some movements of picking up.

* Firms' judgment on current business conditions is improving.

* The employment situation is improving, although some severe aspects remain.

* Private consumption is picking up.

* Recent price developments indicate that the deflation is easing.

<http://www5.cao.go.jp/keizai3/getsurei-e/2013jul.html>

Why Japan?

In its “3 Windows on Japan” presentation, Jetro presents the three windows of opportunity Japan offers: An innovation hub; a business platform for inside and outside Japan; a trendsetter.

http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/whyjapan/pdf/3_windows20120911_en.pdf

Tankan report

The Bank of Japan published the latest Tankan report, the quarterly report surveying the business situation. The main development – on average, all sectors see positively their business conditions or with no change in Q2 and Q3 of this year, in contrast to previous quarters.

<http://www.boj.or.jp/en/statistics/tk/index.htm/>

Industry robots

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) conducted a survey on market trends of the robot industry for the purpose of discussing policies for the industry. The survey revealed that the Japanese market has maintained its position as the world's biggest market overall as of 2011.

The Chinese market has quadrupled in the last five years, growing to a size close to that of the Japanese market in terms of the number of robots.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2013/pdf/0718_01.pdf

Monodzukuri

METI published the FY2012 monodzukuri (manufacturing industry) annual report.

Here is a presentation of the report.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/report/data/monodzukuri2013_01.pdf

Japan attracts skilled foreigners

The government of Japan will weigh creating a new permanent residency status available to skilled foreigners after just three years in Japan, giving them such new privileges as work permits for spouses. The current waiting time for professional workers was cut last year to five years.

Floated as part of an economic growth strategy, the idea is meant to attract foreign multinationals and deepen the pool of R&D talent.

http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/topics/topics_20130710_02.html

Japan's industrial clusters

Japan's famous industries are spread across the country, from Hokkaido in the north to the southern point of Kyushu.

In this page you can search for the best location for your company's line of business (automobiles and transportation, pharmaceuticals & biotech, ICT, electronic components & devices, precision machinery, the environment or any other), check what the local authority offers and what infrastructure will support your business – and choose.

<http://www.jetro.go.jp/en/invest/region/icinfo/?print=1>

Nadeshiko programme

METI and the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE) have jointly selected enterprises that are outstanding for encouraging women's empowerment and granted them the "Nadeshiko Brand".

It appears women's managerial skills in increasing company results outweigh the average.

http://www.meti.go.jp/english/publications/pdf/journal2013_06b.pdf