



The EXCHANGE

FROM THE PACIFIC TO THE CARIBBEAN SEA



Platinum Coast, Barbados

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE EMBASSY OF JAPAN IN BARBADOS

Edition 5 • JAN-JUN 2026

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MESSAGE FROM THE AMBASSADOR



Dear Friends,

The first half of 2026 has been one of meaningful engagement and continued service to the people of the jurisdictions we serve. During this period, I was especially pleased to host the celebration of His Majesty the Emperor's 66th birthday, where we shared Japanese cuisine, music, and sake with invited guests in a spirit of friendship and cultural exchange.

Another highlight of this period was the inaugural Japan–Barbados Business Mission, which brought fifteen companies from Japan's private and public sectors to Barbados to exchange information and ideas on water management and climate resilience. The mission created valuable opportunities for local and Japanese stakeholders to connect, and reflected our continued commitment to strengthening technical cooperation on some of the region's most pressing challenges.

Regional partnership was also a priority this quarter. I had the honour of meeting the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Right Honourable Gaston Browne, and other members of government during a visit to the country, an engagement that further underscored our dedication to fostering meaningful ties across the Eastern Caribbean.

We continued to advance Japan's commitment to environmental sustainability and climate resilience through the Barbados Coastal Fisheries Resilience Project and the Project for Improving National Sargassum Management Capacities in the Caribbean, reflecting our ongoing investment in the region's long-term climate readiness.

People-to-people exchange remained at the heart of the Embassy's cultural outreach this quarter. The Japanese Calendar Exhibition invited visitors to experience Japan's breathtaking landscapes, traditions, and seasonal beauty through photography. We also participated in several events that allowed us the opportunity to share Japanese language and craft with members of the public.

This spirit of exchange was equally alive in education and professional development. The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme Alumni Association (JETAA) Barbados Chapter celebrated its first anniversary, continuing to strengthen lasting connections between Japan and Barbados through its growing alumni network. The MEXT Scholarship and JET programmes remain cornerstones of this exchange, and this year again saw deserving Barbadian applicants awarded the opportunity to study, work, and build lifelong ties with Japan.

As we look to the second half of 2026, our team also remains dedicated to providing support to Japanese individuals requiring assistance, as well as to those seeking collaborations with Japan. I also warmly invite you to explore the Cultural Resource Library at the Embassy of Japan in Barbados.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all who support and contribute to the work of this Embassy. Your partnership is the foundation of our shared success.

H. E. Mr MIYASAKA Yusuke
Ambassador of Japan



COOPERATING ON WATER MANAGEMENT AND RESILIENCE



Attendees of the Japan-Barbados Business Forum Pictured with H.E. Mr MIYASAKA (Centre L) and The Hon. Indar Weir (Centre R) Minister of Public and Private Investments.

Japan and Barbados Deepen Partnership on Water Security

Water security has become one of the defining development challenges for small island states, and few conversations have captured that reality as clearly as the one that unfolded at the 2023 Caribbean Water Conference. There, Prime Minister Mia Mottley placed Barbados' water sector squarely on the regional agenda, drawing attention to the vulnerabilities facing the island's water supply and calling for partners willing to help build long-term resilience.

Among those listening closely was the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) St. Lucia office. For Japan, the Prime Minister's appeal opened the door to a new area of cooperation. JICA moved quickly to establish a regional training programme for the OECS and Barbados, creating a platform for participating countries to share technical expertise, with an early and deliberate focus on reducing non-revenue water, the water lost to the system before it ever reaches a customer's tap.

A Growing Partnership

That early cooperation has since matured into something more ambitious. In 2026, the Embassy of Japan expanded Japan's efforts by hosting the inaugural Japan-Barbados Business Forum, a milestone that marked a significant step forward in the Embassy's continued commitment to water management and capacity building on the island.

A Growing Partnership



September 2025 -Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of water management and water-related disaster risk reduction. Signed by Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism of Japan and the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA).

The business forum brought fifteen Japanese companies to Barbados, giving them the chance to engage directly with stakeholders across both the private and public sectors. It was, in effect, the practical extension of the dialogue that began in 2023; moving the relationship from shared concern to shared solutions, with water management and disaster resilience at its core.

Japan is considered a global leader in water management, with some of the lowest water distribution losses in the world and infrastructure built to withstand the kinds of climate-related shocks that island nations increasingly face. Its systems and standards offer a working model for what climate-resilient water security can look like in practice.

Knowledge Exchange Across Oceans

Barbados, by contrast, draws its water supply almost entirely from groundwater¹, a dependency that leaves the island particularly exposed to climate change and natural hazards. Compounding the challenge is a high rate of non-revenue water (NRW), largely the result of aging pipe infrastructure and leaks across the distribution network.

Notably, Japan has faced comparable challenges of its own with aging pipeline infrastructure². Rather than a point of difference, this shared experience has become a point of connection: Japan's transparency about its own infrastructure issues, and the range of solutions it has developed to address them, offers experience that is directly transferable to Barbados' context. Four technologies in particular stand out as suitable for adoption:



Fuji Tecom Inc. Reps displaying pipeline water leak detection technology and equipment.



Attendees of the Japan-Barbados Business Mission.

- **Smart metering** for real-time consumption tracking
- **Data-driven monitoring systems** that build transparency into water management
- **Satellite-based leak detection** to identify losses and direct resources accordingly
- **Decentralized water recycling** to diversify supply and provide resiliency options



Did you know?

— Non revenue water (NRW) describes water that is produced but lost before reaching the customer.

Two Days of Engagement



Japanese Business Forum Participants out in the Field.

The business forum was structured to turn these possibilities into concrete connections. On the first day, participating Japanese companies showcased their solutions in disaster-resilient infrastructure, digital technologies, and water management through presentations, exhibitions and networking sessions, giving Barbadian stakeholders the chance to engage directly with company representatives.

The second day shifted from showcase to site: the Japanese delegation visited ongoing projects supporting disaster response and infrastructural development across the island. These visits offered the delegation a firsthand view of Barbados' priorities and challenges. This insight will help shape how future cooperation is designed.

Building on What Works

What the Japan-Barbados Business Forum ultimately underscored is the value of international partnership in developing practical, sustainable solutions.

From the Prime Minister's call to action in 2023 at the Caribbean Water Conference, to a delegation of fifteen companies engaging directly with stakeholders in 2026, the relationship between Japan and Barbados on water management has moved steadily from conversation to collaboration.

As both countries look ahead, the business forum stands as a marker of what focused, technical cooperation can achieve, and a foundation for the next phase of Japan and Barbados' cooperation on water security.



H.E. Mr MIYASAKA with The Hon. Indar Weir, Minister of Public and Private Investments.

¹ -<https://www.weforum.org/stories/food-water-air/japan-water-infrastructure-resilience-and-sustainability/>

² - <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2026/05/20/barbados-to-strengthen-water-security-with-world-bank-support>

BUSINESS FEATURE



FUJI TECOM INC.

For more than sixty years, Fuji Tecom Inc. has worked alongside water utilities to strengthen leak detection and improve the management of water distribution systems.

Drawing on decades of experience in Japan and other international markets, the company combines practical field techniques with modern digital technologies to support more efficient water infrastructure.

The Barbados-Japan Business Mission gave representatives from Fuji Tecom the chance to share insights into leak detection methods developed across a range of operating environments and demonstrate technologies designed to identify hidden pipeline leaks and reduce water losses.

The exchange provided a valuable opportunity for local stakeholders to learn from Japan's experience while exploring approaches that could be adapted to Barbados' own water management needs.

The visit underscored the value of international collaboration in addressing shared challenges, by exchanging technical knowledge, practical experience, and innovative approaches.



Water technician using Fuji Tecom's Pipeline Leak Detection technology.

About Fuji Tecom Inc.



Fuji Tecom Inc specializes in the planning, development, and sales of water pipeline maintenance equipment, including leak detectors, listening sticks, and pipe locators, as well as providing training programs related to non-revenue water (NRW) reduction. In addition, the company offers consulting services for water pipeline maintenance and management in Japan.

TRAINING & CAPACITY BUILDING

Senior Staff of Barbados Water Authority and Antigua Public Utilities Authority Complete JICA Training in Okinawa

Water management professionals from Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda recently travelled to Okinawa, Japan, to participate in the Okinawa Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP). The training opportunity, organized by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) St. Lucia office, is offered regionally to OECS member states and Barbados. This article focuses on the participants from Barbados and Antigua and Barbuda, whose engagement falls within the remit of the Embassy of Japan in Barbados.

The JICA Okinawa Center specialises in exchanges and cooperation specifically for subtropical and island states. The island shares its knowledge, built through decades of investment in infrastructure, planning, and diversified water sources including spring water, groundwater, surface water, and desalination.



The Training Cohort at the Okinawa Integrated Water Resource Training.

Inside the Training

Professionals joining the training, received a comprehensive look at how a mature water utility operates end to end. The participants, all from countries with similarities to Okinawa either in climate or size, could observe a working model of what sustained and deliberate water sector development can achieve.

This programme focused on the management of water resources and water supply services, with particular emphasis on integrated water resources management, water policy, and drought prevention. The curriculum was anchored in six key areas of the utility's work:

Water Treatment & Purification

Slow sand filters, rapid sand filters, and ecological purification systems.

Water Quality Testing

Standards and testing parameters that keep supply safe and consistent.

Mains Laying & Construction

Pipe materials and site organization, through to workmanship and traffic management.

Water Distribution Management

Production, transmission, pressure management, storage, and SCADA-based monitoring.

SPOTLIGHT

GIS: Mapping the Network

Geographic Information Systems work is supported by a dedicated Okinawan team, responsible for continuously managing and updating network data.

Billing Operations

Meter reading, revenue collection, and customer service.

A Participant's Perspective

Three participants represented Barbados and Antigua & Barbuda at the training: Samuel King, Senior Non Revenue Water Technician and Sharon Wilson, Non Revenue Water Engineer of the Barbados Water Authority (BWA), and Jeffery Browne, technician at the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) Water Division. Together, they described the Okinawa training as a highly valuable opportunity to learn practical approaches to water resource management and non-revenue water (NRW) reduction.

A recurring theme across the group was Okinawa's disciplined use of data — both to maintain a structured pipe replacement schedule and to run an integrated management system connecting production through to distribution. Participants identified this as a model with clear potential as a blueprint for strengthening NRW reduction efforts in their own utilities.

For Samuel King, Senior Non-Revenue Water Technician at BWA, a standout experience was a case study on an NRW reduction project on the island of Samoa, a small-island example directly relevant to Barbados' own NRW challenges. The case study demonstrated how data-driven decision-making, leak detection, pressure management, and infrastructure planning can work together to improve water supply performance.



BWA representatives, Mr. Samuel King and Ms. Sharon Wilson

“The exposure the training provided allowed me to assess the performance of my organization against a developed water sector. Although we have similar processes, their level of efficiency far exceeds ours, giving us the opportunity to improve at all levels.”

– Samuel King (BWA)



A participant sharing with the training group, the specific water management conditions of their home country, during a classroom session.



Ecological Purification Systems (EPS), Slow Water Filtration demonstration by Dr. Nobutada Nakamoto

READ MORE Ecological Purification Systems (EPS)



A Participant's Perspective

For Jeffery Browne, a technician at APUA, the most impactful part of the training was a field trip to Nago City, Okinawa, which offered a firsthand look at high-level water works operations, including a comprehensive overview of the water supply service in Nago City and pipe-laying work in action.

Beyond the technical content, all three participants pointed to the international networking opportunities at JICA KCCP 2025 as a valuable chance to benchmark their utilities against more developed water sectors.

The training stands as another example of how Japan's commitment to sharing knowledge and expertise continues to move from partnership into progress.

“

In water production and water purification systems, fundamental standard operating procedures should be followed at all stages of potable water production. Operations must be standardized from source point to consumer – if corners are cut and shortcuts taken, the consequences will most certainly appear later.”

– Jeffery Browne (APUA)



Mr. Jeffery Browne, APUA representative, engaging in a pipe laying field exercise.



Attendees receiving their training certificates



A WEEK OF DISCOVERY: SHERKIMA JAMES REPRESENTS DOMINICA IN JAPAN-LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN EXCHANGE PROGRAM (JUNTOS)

Sherkima Edwina James, a representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Business, Trade and Energy in the Commonwealth of Dominica, was one of seven participants selected for a week-long people-to-people exchange programme in Japan, held from 15–21 February 2026. The JUNTOS programme is designed to build a deeper understanding of Japan's economy, society, history, culture, politics, and diplomatic relations, giving participants the tools to share that knowledge at home and strengthen ties between their countries and Japan.

For James, the experience was, in her words, "an amazing and unforgettable experience." Over the course of the week, she and other participants gained insight into Japan through visits to the island of Oshima and several museums, alongside daily meals she described as prepared "with great care and love."

Beyond the cultural programme, two meetings left a lasting impression. James met with a Director-General at Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and she also met the Mayor of Oshima, encounters she described as truly unforgettable.



Ms. Sherkima James with Mr. Motoyuki Ishize, Director-General of the Latin American and Caribbean Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA).

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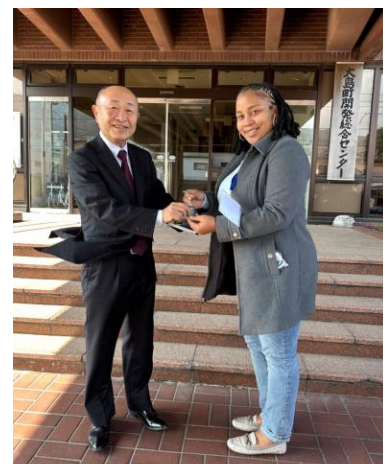
"My trip to Japan was an amazing and unforgettable experience, where I gained valuable knowledge about the country, and Japanese culture. A highlight was meeting the Director-General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. The discussions on climate change were enlightening and his interest in the JUNTOS programme was very touching."

– Sherkima James

For James, the week reflected more than a tour of Japan; it was a firsthand look at the depth of the relationship between Japan and Dominica, and a reminder of how much that relationship can grow through direct, personal exchange.



JUNTOS Participants Participate in a Taiko Drumming Exercise as a cultural exchange component of the trip.



Ms. James, and the Mayor of Oshima Island, Mr. Chōichi Sakaue, Oshima

ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Barbados Coastal Fisheries Resilience Project

The Barbados Coastal Fisheries Resilience Project continues to advance efforts to build a more resilient, sustainable, and climate-ready fisheries sector. Funded by the Government of Japan and implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Government of Barbados, the project supports strategic investments in infrastructure, technology, disaster preparedness, and livelihood development.

The project also carries forward the contributions of the late Dr. Shelly Ann Cox, Chief Fisheries Officer, whose dedication to Barbados' fisheries sector and commitment to strengthening coastal resilience were deeply valued. Dr. Cox was a strong supporter and valued partner of this initiative, working closely with stakeholders to advance efforts towards a more resilient and sustainable fisheries sector. Her commitment, expertise, and spirit of collaboration will be remembered as an important part of the project's journey.

The following highlights showcase two recent milestones and engagements that are helping to strengthen Barbados' fisheries sector and coastal communities.



Participants, Donors and Trainees pose after the opening ceremony.
(Photo Credit: Adriel Jackman)

The Fishing Vessel Operations Level 3 NVQ Training officially commenced on 26 January 2026. The trainees of the 8-week course received certification from the Technical and Vocational Education Training (TVET) Council upon successful completion.

The Disaster Resilient Boatbuilding Symposium was held in Barbados from 17 to 18 March 2026, bringing together boatbuilders, fisheries stakeholders, and disaster resilience experts to explore strategies for strengthening the sector against extreme weather events.

Also invited were students of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology. Their inclusion reflects the importance of investing in young people as future contributors to the development of a more resilient and sustainable maritime industry.



Students of the Samuel Jackman Prescod Institute of Technology attend the boatbuilding symposium
(Photo Credit: UNDP)

Signing Ceremony for the Caribbean Emergency Operations Centre



H.E. Mr. MIYASAKA Yusuke, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados, and Mr. Daniel Longhurst, Officer-in-Charge and Deputy Country Director, WFP Caribbean Multi-Country Office.

On 18 February, Japan and the World Food Programme (WFP) signed and exchanged notes for the construction of the **Caribbean Emergency Operations Centre** at the Grantley Adams International Airport.

The facility will improve on the Caribbean regional logistics hub established by the Government of Barbados and WFP. The project intends to significantly enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of disaster preparedness and response efforts throughout the Caribbean.

Signing Ceremony for Renovation of an Autism Vocational Centre for Accessibility and Hurricane Resilience

On March 26, the Government of Japan and the Autism Association of Barbados signed a grant contract for the grassroots project, “The Project for Upgrading the **Autism Resource Centre and Inclusive Emergency Shelter.**”

The upgraded centre will ensure a safe and fully accessible emergency shelter for persons with disabilities during the hurricane season, equipped with ramps with handrails, a 1,000 gallon water tank, a generator, and hurricane rated window shutters.

The initiative reflects Japan’s commitment to strengthening disaster resilience and supporting inclusive communities in Barbados.



Left: Mr. Frederick JOHNSON, President of the Autism Association of Barbados, Right: H.E. Mr. MIYASAKA Yusuke, Ambassador of Japan.

Ambassador MIYASAKA Visits Antigua and Barbuda, Deepening Bilateral Ties

On October 13, 2025, Ambassador H.E. Mr. Miyasaka Yusuke, had the pleasure of visiting the Antigua and Barbuda Coast Guard. During the visit, he observed the state-of-the-art aquatic plant harvester donated by the Government of Japan in August 2025 to support the Coast Guard’s efforts to address the ongoing challenge of sargassum seaweed accumulation along the country’s shores.



H.E. Mr. MIYASAKA Yusuke (centre) flanked by officers of the Antigua and Barbuda Coast Guard and other members of the Embassy of Japan.

The aquatic plant harvester will strengthen the country’s capacity to efficiently remove accumulated sargassum from coastal waters.

The donation responds to the growing sargassum challenge affecting Antigua and Barbuda’s coastlines, marine ecosystems, communities, and tourism.

It also reaffirms the strong partnership and cooperation between the island nations of Japan and Antigua and Barbuda.

St. Kitts and Nevis Receives New Equipment for Sargassum Management in Handover Ceremony

On 26 February 2026, the Government of Japan handed over equipment to the Government of St. Kitts and Nevis to help address the growing challenge of sargassum seaweed inundations.

The equipment package, including drones, tractors, workboats, dump trucks, all-terrain vehicles, and protective gear, was provided under the Project for Improving National Sargassum Management Capacities in the Caribbean, implemented by UNDP since 2022.

The handover forms part of Japan's US\$12.3 million regional cooperation to enhance Caribbean countries' capacity to monitor, manage, and respond to sargassum through equipment, training, technical expertise, and national planning support.



Centre L-Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Marine Resources, the Honourable Samal Duggins, Centre R- Honorary Consul-General of Japan to St. Kitts and Nevis, Mrs. Sonya Parry with members of UNDP and the Department of Marine Resources. Photo Credit: St. Kitts and Nevis Information Service.



Some of the equipment handed over to support sargassum management. Photos Credit: St. Kitts and Nevis Information Service.

Bajans in Japan

An Unforgettable Year

By Medha Persaud, JET Cohort 2023



Hi, I'm Medha Persaud. I currently work as a Primary School Counsellor in Barbados, but not too long ago, I spent an unforgettable year living in Japan as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) through the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme.

My interest in Japan started as a child watching Dragon Ball Z and anime, which led to me attending local conventions like AnimeKon and trying cosplay. From there, my interest in Japanese culture grew, and I wanted to visit and experience Japan firsthand. I first applied to the JET Programme in 2022 and wasn't selected. I felt dejected, but my sister encouraged me to try again, and I did. On the morning of March 7, 2023, I opened my inbox and saw an email that completely changed my life — I got in! It's a moment I'll always remember.

In Japan, I lived in Kashima City, Ibaraki Prefecture, a peaceful and quiet place where people were incredibly kind. The thing that surprised me most initially was the convenience; in Barbados, most places close by 10 p.m., but in Japan, you can grab a full meal or even pay bills at almost any hour at convenience stores like 7-Eleven, Lawson, and Family Mart.



Mt. Fuji, The Highest Mountain in Japan

LEARNING JAPANESE

Before moving to Japan, I didn't know any Japanese, but I made it my mission to learn. I brought my full Bajan friendliness with me too, so everyone I passed received a cheerful "good morning" or "good evening" (in Japanese, of course!).

At first, I think I surprised people; I was one of the few foreigners in the area, and greeting strangers isn't exactly the norm there. But over time, those simple greetings encouraged people to stop and chat with me.

Through self-study and every conversation I could get, I grew more confident with the language. Those exchanges helped me build genuine connections and made my time in Kashima City truly special.

LIFE IN JAPAN

My teaching schedule as an ALT consisted of three classes each day. Since the school had only three grade levels with one class each, I taught the same students daily. Before each lesson, the English teacher and I would go over the plan, my contribution to the class was often a quick presentation, a read-aloud exercise, or English conversation practice.

On Wednesdays, there was an after-school English Conversation Club with the high schoolers, where we'd chat about everything from Barbadian culture to Japanese pop culture. I also helped my 3rd-grade students prepare for the prefectural English-Speaking Competition, practicing speaking and intonation daily for months. Their dedication and hard work paid off with our middle school's first-ever competition win!



Nara's Famous Deer Park



Took a shot at archery

Outside of school, I used every chance available to travel, visiting Hyogo, Osaka, Nara, Mount Fuji, Tokyo, and even skiing in Fukushima.

ADVICE TO BARBADIANS INTERESTED IN JAPAN

My advice for Barbadians interested in visiting Japan: go for it! It really comes down to your willingness to adapt and embrace cultural differences. Also, don't limit yourself to just big cities like Tokyo, give the countryside a chance! Places like Ibaraki Prefecture offer a richer, more immersive look into everyday Japanese life.



Skiing in Fukushima

ABOUT JET PROGRAMME

The JET Programme provides eligible Barbadians the opportunity to work in Japan as assistant language teachers.

To learn more about JET, visit
https://www.bb.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/jet.html



BaJans in Japan

A Dream Come True

By Aldain Harris
MEXT 2026 Scholarship Awardee



"It doesn't matter how good you are if no one knows who you are."

Although I cannot remember where this quote originated, it has guided me on my journey until now. I am pleased to introduce myself: my name is Aldain Harris. I am a graduate of the Barbados Community College (BCC), where I studied Arts and Entertainment Management. Recently, I was awarded the great honour of becoming a Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology/ Monbukagakusho (MEXT) Scholar, and I am currently pursuing a master's in Global Business and Management Studies at the highly respected Doshisha University in Japan.

SETTING THE STAGE

I suppose I can say my journey to Japan started at BCC. The main lesson from my undergraduate experience that I've carried into this journey, is learning to stress-test a dream, to view it realistically through finance, marketing, and innovation, rather than simply chasing it blindly.

My undergraduate thesis explored whether animation could boost the Barbadian economy. In researching this topic, I came across Japan's experience with animation sector growth, where the industry became a boon not only to its economy, but also to its culture. Japan and Barbados share strong ties, with Japan offering numerous avenues for cultural exchange, and this ultimately became the catalyst that motivated me to pursue higher education in Japan.

After graduating BCC, my motivation to create mutual economic benefit between Barbados and Japan remained. While researching the best ways to pursue this goal, I came across the MEXT Scholarship on the Japanese Embassy in Barbados' website. With my thesis already grounded in Japan's economy and culture, applying felt like the natural next step in that same pursuit.



My Doshisha University Japanese Language Cohort

THE MEXT SCHOLAR JOURNEY

I became a MEXT Scholar after almost three years, it was quite the experience! The first time I considered applying, I missed the deadline, so I used that year instead to learn Japanese and strengthen my application materials for the following round. When I applied a year later, I made it to the interview stage but wasn't selected.

This was a difficult experience, but I decided I would try again and not give up so easily on my dream. My faith kept me from being discouraged. I mentally replayed the interview, thinking through the questions I was asked and how I could have answered better.

Ultimately, my faith and determination to improve are what helped me to finally secure the scholarship on my second try.



Beautiful Doshisha University Campus Architecture

LIFE IN JAPAN



Making new friends and connections at Doshisha

So far, my experience at Doshisha University can be captured in a single word: "spectacular." Built in a classic British style that contrasts beautifully with the surrounding traditional Japanese architecture, the campus truly feels like a towering scholastic sanctuary.

I recently completed a 4-month Japanese language course before beginning my 2-year MSc program, and two of my classes pair us with Japanese volunteers who help us understand the material. I found that this component especially has been a wonderful opportunity to practice the language and make genuine friends along the way.

A few things have genuinely impressed me since arriving in Japan: the trains, which are remarkably efficient and punctual (I'd never ridden one before coming to Japan!), and the sheer number of people who get around by bicycle. It's a convenient mode of transport I'd recommend to future scholars or, failing that, invest in a good pair of walking shoes.

ADVICE TO FUTURE MEXT APPLICANTS

ABOUT MEXT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan offers prestigious scholarships to international students seeking to pursue studies in Japan.

To learn more about MEXT, visit https://www.bb.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/

To anyone considering applying for MEXT, my advice is to let your research proposal reflect mutual benefit for Japan, your country, and yourself, and try to keep it grounded in your undergraduate discipline.

I also believe proficiency in Japanese isn't just helpful, it's essential, both for daily survival and, academically, for anyone hoping to conduct research involving Japanese people directly.

EVENTS

A recap of embassy events for the first half of 2026.

EMPEROR'S BIRTHDAY

MARCH - H.E. Mr MIYASAKA Yusuke hosted a reception to celebrate the 66th birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan.

Among the distinguished guests in attendance, was Senator the Honourable Christopher Sinckler, Senior Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.



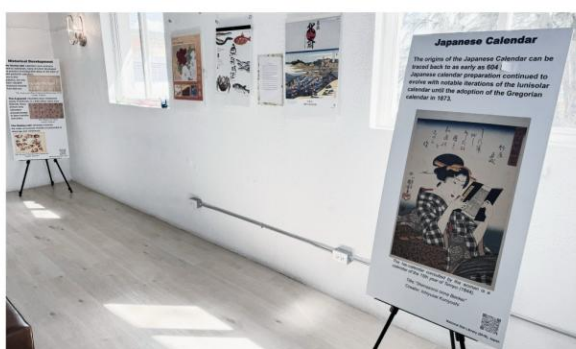
PROVIDENCE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL MULTI-CULTURAL DAY

MARCH - The Embassy of Japan (EOJ) participated in the Multicultural Day celebration hosted by Providence Elementary School. The Embassy's booth featured a variety of engaging and educational activities, where students and parents enjoyed folding origami, playing traditional games, and practicing Japanese calligraphy.

MONBUKAGAKUSHO (MEXT) SCHOLAR COURTESY VISIT

MARCH - The 2026 MEXT Scholarship awardee Aldain Harris visited the Embassy of Japan ahead of his departure to pursue graduate studies at Doshisha University's Graduate School in Japan. Mr. Harris plans to explore connections between Japanese and Barbadian cultures through animation.

We wish Mr. Harris every success in his academic journey and future endeavors.



JAPANESE CALENDAR EXHIBITION

MAY - The EOJ hosted its Japanese Calendar Exhibition at the Caribbean Brushstrokes Gallery in Bridgetown, attracting more than 115 visitors.

The exhibition featured striking artwork and photographs highlighting Japan's seasonal landscapes, architecture, gardens, and traditional arts.

Additionally guests enjoyed an origami workshop, a strawberry daifuku (mochi with strawberry) demonstration by the Ambassador's chef, Mr. SAKAMOTO, and a matcha tasting.

EVENTS

A recap of embassy events for the first half to 2026.

BARBADOS NATIONAL TRUST OPEN HOUSE

MAY - The EOJ participated in the Barbados National Trust's Open House Gardens event at Kingston Quarry, showcasing Japanese culture through origami, calligraphy, and calendar displays.

The former quarry will be turned into a Japanese Garden and stand as a lasting symbol of friendship and cultural exchange between Japan, Barbados, and the wider Caribbean.



BARBADOS MUSEUMS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL MUSEUMS DAY

MAY - The Embassy of Japan participated in the Barbados Museum and Historical Society's International Museums Day 2026 Open Day celebrations.

At our booth, visitors explored various aspects of Japanese culture through a display of Niponica magazines and a selection of the books available for loan from the Embassy's Cultural Resource Library.

JETAA ANNIVERSARY JET FAREWELL

JUNE - H.E. Mr MIYASAKA Yusuke hosted a reception at the Official Residence to celebrate the first anniversary of the JET Alumni Association (JETAA) Barbados Chapter and to wish farewell to the four Barbadians selected for the 40th intake of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme, ahead of their departure for Japan.



PROVIDENCE SECONDARY SCHOOL LANGUAGE DAY

JUNE -The EOJ participated in Language Day hosted by the Providence Secondary School.

The Japan booth introduced the Japanese writing system through interactive and engaging activities. Students were also excited to have an opportunity to try Japanese Calligraphy (shodō).

The EXCHANGE

FROM THE PACIFIC TO THE CARIBBEAN SEA

The Exchange is published bi-annually by The Embassy of Japan in Barbados. Our publication focuses on the work of the Japanese Embassy in Barbados serving, Antigua & Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica and St. Christopher & Nevis.

Thank you for reading this edition. We appreciate your time and engagement.



STAY IN TOUCH

Website: www.bb.emb-japan.go.jp



Email: barbados@rt.mofa.go.jp

Instagram: [@Japanemb_barbados](https://www.instagram.com/Japanemb_barbados)



Fujiwara Palace Site,
Nara, Japan

Japan's newest UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Ancient Capital of Asuka and Fujiwara. Memories of the birth of Japan are etched on the land of Asuka- Fujiwara including burial mounds, the first buddhist temples and the first large grid patterned city.

Source: "Asuka-Fujiwara Aiming for World Heritage" Website: <https://asuka-fujiwara.jp/>

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