

Address by Ambassador Satoshi Suzuki
on the 1st Anniversary of the Imphal Peace Museum
(June 22, 2020)

Respected citizens of Imphal,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my warm congratulations to everyone on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Imphal Peace Museum.

I regret that the COVID-19 pandemic prevented me from joining you all in Imphal at this memorable occasion.

But I am pleased to be part of this anniversary in the form of a virtual ceremony.

At this special moment, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of Manipur, Manipur Tourism Forum, Nippon Foundation, Sasakawa Peace Foundation, and all those who have contributed to the construction of the museum and preparation of the exhibition, for their devotion and hard work.

Even after the opening of the museum, they have been

working earnestly for its maintenance and improvement. I would like to thank them all for their efforts.

I heard that since its opening, the museum received over 14,000 visitors.

This would never have been possible without everyone's contributions.

The Embassy of Japan in New Delhi remains committed to rendering support.

I recall my first trip to Imphal in March this year. Besides the Peace Museum, I visited the Imphal War Cemetery and the India Peace Memorial to offer my heartfelt prayers for the fallen souls.

Then I paid a visit to the Imphal Peace Museum. Standing at the foot of the Red Hill, once one of the fiercest battlegrounds, where so many precious lives were lost, I felt that there is no better place for us to reflect on the past and appreciate the peace that we enjoy today.

At the museum, I was impressed by the contents of the exhibition, which focused on three distinct time frames:

during the war, after the war, and the present. By colorfully presenting the past and present of Imphal, the museum passes down the history of the Battle of Imphal to the coming generations of the peoples of Japan, India, and Britain.

The museum serves as a significant symbol of Japan-Manipur friendship.

I truly believe that the museum will keep developing and playing its vital role of connecting the past, present, and future, in the years to come.

Before concluding, I would like to share a piece of happy news with you.

The Government of Japan has conferred the Spring Decoration 2020 on Dr. Dhabali Singh, the first President of Manipur Tourism Forum, who devoted considerable efforts in the run up to the opening of the museum.

Dr. Singh is decorated with the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays, for his contributions to promoting friendship between our two countries.

I would like to take this opportunity to offer my warmest congratulations to Dr. Singh.

In concluding, I would like to express my sincere gratitude again to distinguished guests and all the staff members of the museum.

I renew my determination to strengthen the relationship between Japan and Manipur on this important day.

I look forward to visiting Manipur again soon.

Thank you.