

**ADDRESS BY MR. HIDETOSHI UKITA, MINISTER OF THE EMBASSY OF  
JAPAN AT THE OPENING OF  
THE CONTEMPORARY JAPANESE POSTERS EXHIBITION  
AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM, DHAKA JANUARY 18, 2005**

**Mr. Kazi Abul Kashem,  
Honorable Secretary, Ministry of Cultural Affairs;  
Prof. Mahmudul Haque;  
Director General, National Museum;  
Distinguished guests and art lovers;  
Ladies and gentlemen;**

**Assalamu Alaikum.**

**It is a great pleasure for me to be present here this afternoon at the inauguration of the contemporary Japanese poster exhibition titled “Discover Japan through Contemporary Posters”. A fine display of the outstanding works by some of the leading Japanese graphic artists, this exhibition is a miniature representation of contemporary creative traditions and popular art movements of Japan.**

**First of all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the Bangladesh National Museum for co-organizing this event along with the Embassy of Japan on behalf of the Japan Foundation. This is, in fact, a part of a continued and successful collaboration between the National Museum and the Embassy of Japan in promoting the arts and culture of both our countries. In this regard,**

**I deeply appreciate the continued support of Prof. Mahmudul Haque, as one of the prominent Japan University graduates, in making our collaborations very successful.**

**The “Discover Japan through Contemporary Posters” exhibition is sponsored by the Japan Foundation. Founded in 1972, the Japan Foundation has been playing a pioneering role to introduce Japanese culture in foreign lands and to promote cultural exchange thorough sponsorship and participation to various exhibitions and collaborated work and many more with overseas museums and other organizations. In recent years, for the Bangladeshi public, we held top and kite, traditional Japanese doll, ‘Kokeshi’-wooden doll exhibitions from the Japan Foundation’s collections.**

**Ladies and gentlemen;**

**Although the history of our governmental relations spans little over 30 years, the actual relation of our people goes back a long time. Japan historically had close connections with people in this region. The encounter between Rabindranath Tagore and Tenshin Okakura, a prominent Japanese artist, at the beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century is a milestone event that ushered a chain of cultural exchanges through the intimate relationships between such great personalities. I would like to point out that even before the independence of Bangladesh, youths of this region had shown great**

**interest in Japan, its arts, culture and tradition and had chosen Japan as the preferred destination for higher education.**

**So, both directly and indirectly, Japan has played important roles in nurturing the talents of Bangladesh by creating opportunities for higher training and education. Over the years, these exchanges have acted as human bridges in overcoming cultural gaps and further consolidating our bilateral relations. Every year, more than hundred Bangladeshi students receive Japanese Government Scholarships. The prominent Bangladeshi painter, Prof. Mohammad Kibria went to Japan for higher studies some 40 years back. At present, nearly one-fourth of the teachers of the Institute of Fine Arts in the University of Dhaka, are Japanese degree-holders. The embassy hopes to extend such educational and skill-development incentives to the talented people of Bangladesh in the future and also to maximize the gains from cultural synergy and understanding.**

**At the same time, Japan has always made conscious efforts in presenting and popularizing its culture and tradition through various programs like ikebana and bonsai exhibitions, Japanese drum concerts, poetry recitals etc. so that Bangladeshi people are better able to understand and appreciate Japanese culture and its people.**

**The current exhibition, displaying 75 posters created by 42 highly talented graphic artists, presents various aspects of Japanese arts and culture to the Bangladeshi audience. These works portray Japan's transition to popular art forms using modern technologies and contain diverse themes or topics. The themes include Japanese nature, sports, culture, traditional theater, films, transition to modernity, industrialization, corporate culture, changes in fashion, architecture and so on.**

**I hope that you'll find these works attractive and see that these works are not merely limited to a means of advertising, but important social statements have been conveyed through these. I am confident that these works would help to generate greater interest of Bangladeshi people in Japan and life in Japan in an eye-catching way. I wish this exhibition all the success.**

**Thank you very much.**