

Brazil independence day

Brazil, Japan foster a growing, enduring partnership

Marcos Bezerra Abbott Galvão
AMBASSADOR OF BRAZIL

Compared to many countries, Japan among them, Brazil is a relatively young nation. Today we celebrate the 189th anniversary of our independence.

National days are a good occasion to look back at our achievements as a country and consider what lies ahead, including the role of international partnerships in our development.

As we Brazilians reflect on our past, present and future, we bear in mind the century-old presence of about 1.5 million Japanese descendants in our society, as well as the contribution of Japanese investment and cooperation to the progress of our economy.

Despite the immense geographical distance that separates us, the partnership between Brazil and Japan is based on strong human bonds — which for the last 20 years have also included the presence now of approximately 220,000 Brazilians working and living in this country — and on very concrete economic fruits of our cooperation.

I am certain that all those in Japan familiar with the history of our partnership — and especially those here who have visited or lived in Brazil — are perfectly conscious of the deep sense of friendship and admiration we Brazilians feel with regard to the Japanese people.

Brazilian solidarity

We all know that the natural disasters of March 11 have left an indelible mark on the year 2011. The entire world anxiously followed the developments of the situation in Japan and expressed admiration for the se-

rene, orderly and steadfast manner in which the Japanese people conducted themselves in the midst of extreme circumstances. In the days following the tragic events, the international community joined forces to support the effort of Japanese society and authorities to assist victims and initiate recovery. That truly global mobilization was a strong testimony of the positive light in which this country is viewed by other nations.

As the ambassador of Brazil in Japan, I have felt, both on a personal and professional level, a great deal of pride for the actions of solidarity toward the Japanese people immediately and spontaneously organized by the community of Brazilians living in this country — the third largest group of foreign residents in Japan.

Within days of the earthquake and tsunami, Brazilians in Aichi Prefecture collected about 30,000 blankets to be shipped to the affected areas, where the victims of the disasters had their homes destroyed and were suffering from the low temperatures of winter. Two weeks later, the Embassy of Brazil helped launch the "Brasil Solidário" — Brazilian Solidarity — movement in which we joined the Brazilian community and companies to undertake actions, such as the donation of 400 bicycles to victims in Miyagi Prefecture.

On June 25, I visited Minamisanriku, where I had the opportunity to meet Mayor Jin Sato and discuss our efforts to support the citizens of his community. Following that meeting, we were able to organize our participation in the monthly fair hosted by the municipality. We hope that we accomplished our goal of taking some needed entertainment and personal warmth — "carinho" as we say in Brazil — to the citizens of



President Dilma Rousseff of Brazil

Minamisanriku and to convey our concern for their well-being. Together with our community and companies, we continue to consider further actions of solidarity in the Tohoku region.

Brazil-Japan relations

The fraternal ties between our peoples are supported by the close and friendly relations held by our governments. In March, Brazil without delay offered assistance to Japan. A day after the earthquake, President Dilma Rousseff and Minister of External Relations Antonio de Aguiar Patriota both sent messages of condolences and solidarity to Prime Minister Naoto Kan and Foreign Minister Takeaki Matsumoto. Our initial offer of assistance to the affected areas was adapted, at the suggestion of the Japanese authorities, and took the form of a donation to the Red Cross.

On April 16, Minister Patriota visited Japan to personally express Brazil's solidarity and discuss steps to strengthen our bilateral relations. Challenging times, he said, call for friends to look toward the future and work together to relaunch their partnership. Both foreign ministers

discussed a vast array of issues of our bilateral and international agendas to enhance our partnership and cooperation. As a measure of the growing momentum of our relations, Minister Matsumoto promptly accepted Minister Patriota's invitation to visit Brazil. He travelled to Brasilia on June 30, after attending the Mercosur Leaders' Summit in Asunción, Paraguay. It was the first visit of a Japanese foreign minister since 2007.

These high-level contacts demonstrate that both our governments are keenly aware of the importance and potential of our bilateral relations and determined to further reinforce them.

The economies of Brazil and Japan show an increasing degree of mutual complementarity. As an emerging nation overcoming fundamental challenges of development, Brazil requires very large investments in areas such as infrastructure, innovation and education, to consolidate and further the extraordinary progress accomplished over the last years.

Japan, a mature and highly developed economy, has a long history of cooperation with Brazil and, since at least the 1950s, has played a key role in the development of such industries as steel, pulp and paper, shipbuilding, electronics and automobiles, as well as in the advances in agriculture that transformed Brazil into one of the world's largest food producers and exporters. While an increasing number of international partners are attracted to the potential of working with Brazil, we very much wish that Japan continues to play the central role that our impressive joint achievements, mutual trust and century-old friendship call for.

Fortunately, the awareness of the importance of strong Japan-Brazil relations is not limited to

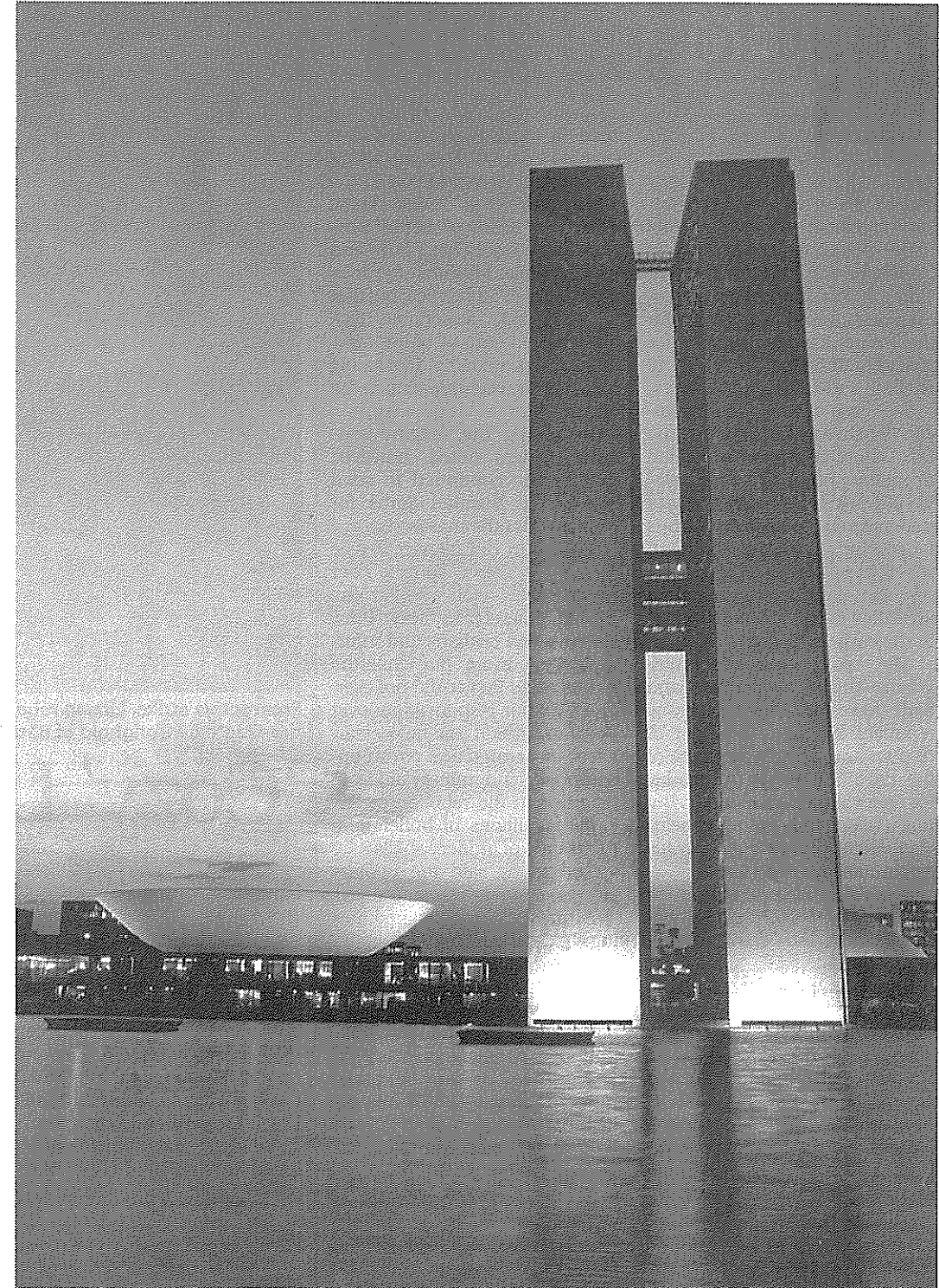
government officials. Brazilian and Japanese companies and business leaders have played and continue to play a key part in the construction, expansion and diversification of our partnership.

In the second week of August, the historical Brazilian city of Salvador hosted two meetings of significant players of our bilateral relationship. On both occasions, I had the opportunity to witness the high priority attributed to the advancement of our commercial and investment ties.

The first of those meetings was led by the Ministry of Development, Industry and Foreign Trade of Brazil (MDIC) and the Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry (METI) of Japan. The fifth meeting of this mechanism in three years, it once again provided the opportunity for both governments, through various ministries and agencies participating in both delegations, to update and advance a broad range of issues.

The second event was the 14th edition of the Brazil-Japan Economic Cooperation Committee, led by the Brazilian National Confederation of Industry (CNI) and the Keidanren (Japan Business Federation). From Brazil, in addition to high-level authorities such as the governor of the state of Bahia, the minister for development, industry and trade, and the president of the National Development Bank (BNDES), more than 150 executives from the private sector took part in the meeting, among them the CEOs of some of our largest companies. From Japan, more than 120 company executives of numerous, very important Japanese companies participated in the event.

Recent data and news demonstrate the dynamism of bilateral economic relations. In the first five months of 2011, Japan



Modern touch: The National Congress building, designed by Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, is the seat of the legislative body of Brazil's federal government in Brasilia. EMBRATUR

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Strategic vision for bilateral ties

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moved back up in the ranking of sources of foreign direct investments in Brazil and today is fourth in that list of countries — after more than 20 years of comparatively more modest performance. Thus far this year, more than 20 announcements of investment decisions by Japanese companies in Brazil have been made public — and I have good reason to believe more are on the way. This welcome trend has led me to say that Japanese companies are truly rediscovering Brazil.

Brazil's achievements

In the last few years, Brazil has drawn international attention due to the progress in economic stability and growth, as well as the great transformation Brazil accomplished in improving the living conditions of its citizens.

During the last decade, close to 30 million Brazilians were lifted out of poverty. A new and expanding middle class — joined in recent years by about 36 million citizens — is emerging in our country and these new consumers are now integrated into a vigorous domestic market, the main factor behind the sustained growth of our economy. President Rousseff has made a priority of increasing the scope of social programs so that we may once and for all overcome the situation of poverty in which 16 million Brazilians still live.

Social progress and development are taking place in Brazil within the context of sound and consistent economic policies. Brazil has maintained high primary budget surpluses for more than 10 years to assure a trend in reduction of public debt over the period. We have adhered to this policy even in the present difficult international economic situation to maintain the fiscal

soundness and the sustainability of our achievements. Among the Group of Twenty countries, we have some of the best performance indicators and projections regarding fiscal balance and public debt.

A challenge faced by Brazil, but also familiar to Japan, refers to the significant appreciation of our currency in the last few years. Our strengthening currency in part reflects Brazil's economic fundamentals and different growth prospects among countries, but also stems from international monetary liquidity conditions.

Since late 2009, Brazilian authorities have implemented a range of measures to help stabilize the exchange rate and address the effects of speculative capital inflows. Furthermore, in early August the government unveiled industrial policy measures to increase the competitiveness of the manufacturing sector affected by the appreciating currency.

Also adding to the positive elements currently drawing attention to our country, Brazil will host major international sporting events that will spotlight our country — the 2014 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament and the Rio 2016 Olympic Games — and they will require additional important investments and thus generate new opportunities.

We will also promote other major events, some in the diplomatic arena, such as the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development ("Rio + 20"), which more than 50 thousand representatives from the entire world are expected to attend, will be an important moment for Brazil. The "Rio + 20" will take place in Rio de Janeiro, from June 4-6 to mark the 20th anniversary of the historic 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development,

as well as to revive international political commitment to sustainable development goals.

Future partnership

In light of Brazil's advances and Japan's renewed interest in deepening our ties, I believe it is time to consider even more carefully the economic complementarities between our countries. We must permanently revisit our bilateral agenda to not only continue our cooperation in traditional fields but also expand our collaboration to areas such as technology, services, and commitment to cultural and educational exchanges.

Although Brazil has diversified trade relations with the global community and is increasingly appealing as a destination for investments from a wide array of countries, the historic human ties and traditional partnership between Brazil and Japan all contribute toward ever closer relations. Both countries need to engage in forging a strategic vision for this partnership to take full advantage of our complementarities, promote our development goals and make ever more concrete the wish for greater interaction among our nations.

This is the very positive work program that lies ahead all those of us already involved or yet to participate in building and expanding relations between our two countries.

As 191 million Brazilians celebrate the national day of Brazil, the strengths of our democracy and economy, the progress we have made in overcoming our still very important social challenges, I wish to convey a message of renewed friendship to the people and government of Japan. May our partnership continue to be an increasingly relevant contribution to the progress and well-being of both our nations.

**Congratulations
to the People of Brazil
on the Occasion of
the 189th Anniversary of
Their Independence**



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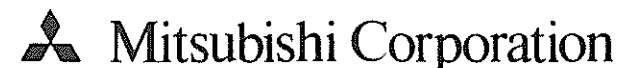


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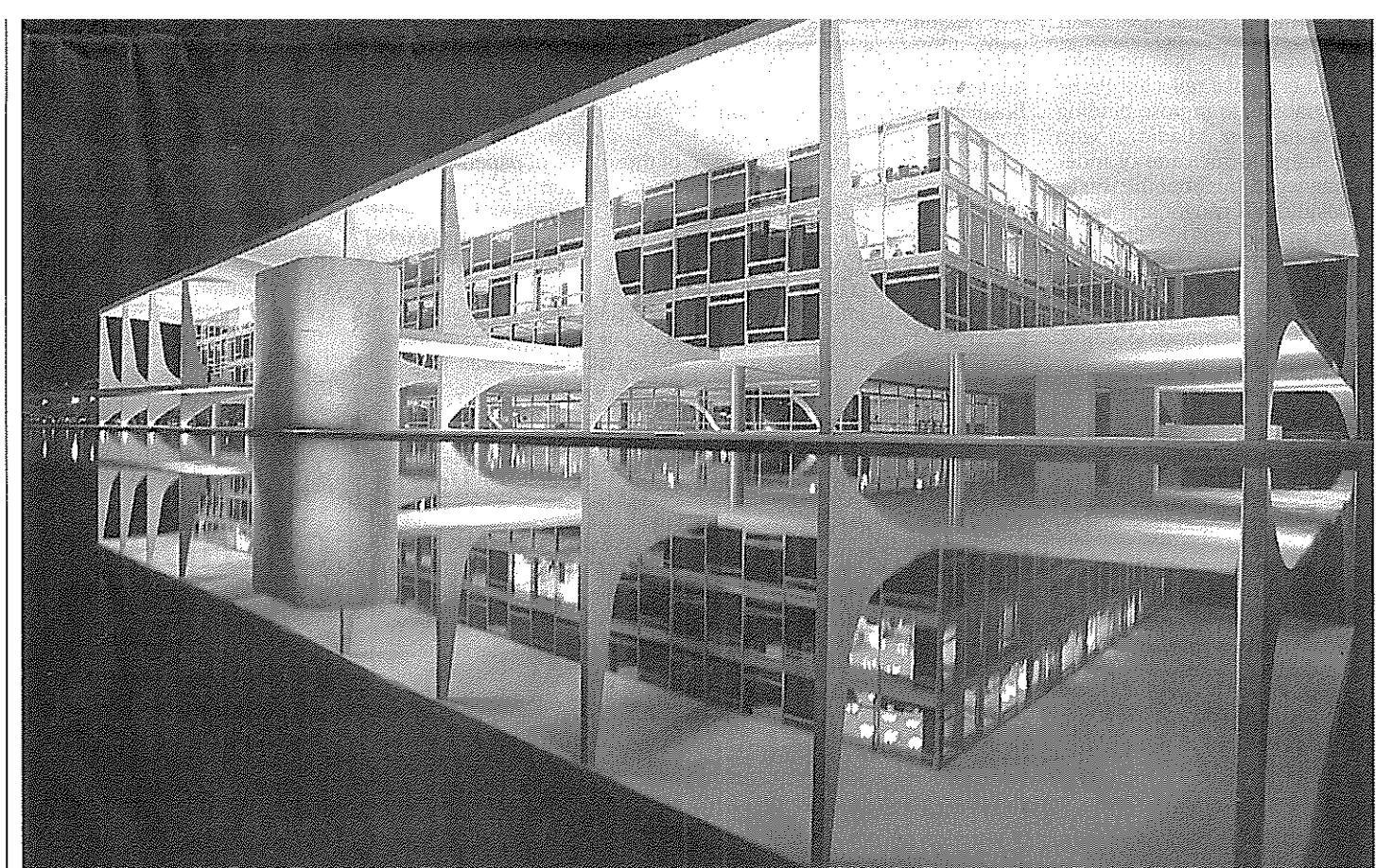
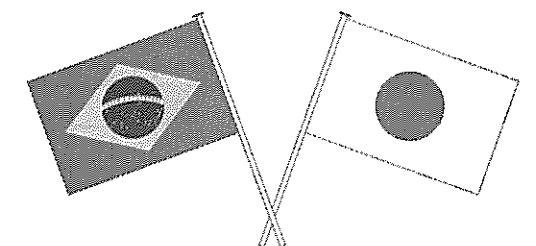


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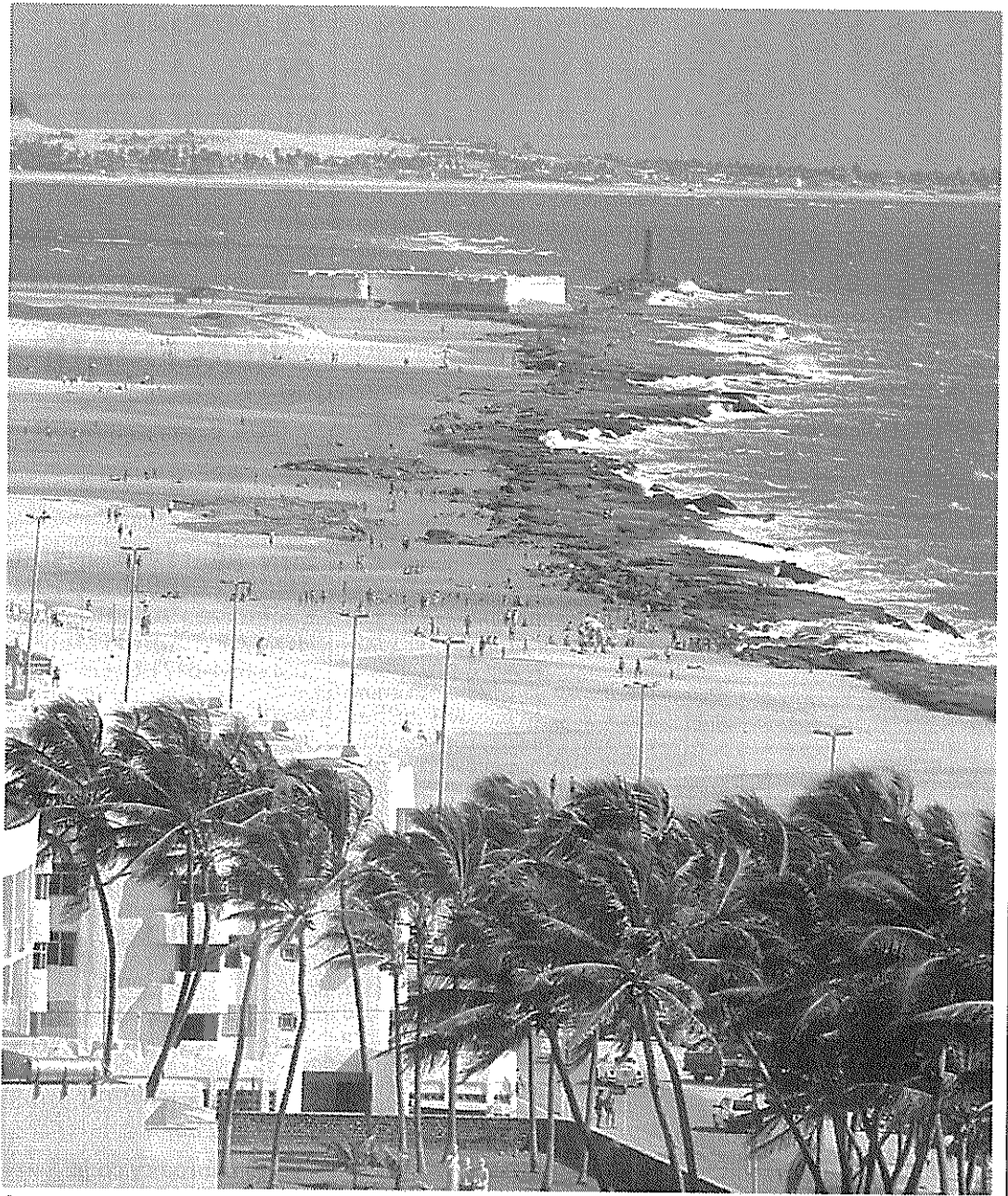


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Capital building: Designed by Oscar Niemeyer, the Planalto Palace in Brasilia houses the offices of the president. RICARDO STUCKERT



Sun city: Located in northeastern Brazil, Natal is a tourist destination known for its sunshine and climate, and is one of the host cities of the 2014 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament. EMBRATUR

Congratulations

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the 189th Anniversary of Their Independence**



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