

August 28, 2024

Japan Confers National Decoration upon Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Prime Minister, Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves



Photo courtesy the Office of the Prime Minister

On August 23, His Excellency MATSUBARA Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan, presented a Japanese National Decoration, “The Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun”, to Dr. the Honourable Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, during a Conferment Ceremony held at the Prime Minister’s residence in Kingstown, in recognition of Prime Minister Gonsalves’ exceptional contribution to strengthening bilateral relations and promoting friendship between Japan and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

For the conferment of “The Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun”, members of Prime Minister Gonsalves’ family were in attendance, along with the Honourable Rochelle Forde, Speaker of the House, government officials and members of Cabinet, including the Honourable Grenville Williams, Attorney General; the Honourable Montgomery Daniel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Works, Land and Surveys, and Physical Planning; the Honourable Saboto Caesar, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Rural Transformation, Industry and Labour; the Honourable Camillo Gonsalves, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, and Information Technology; the Honourable Carlos James, Esq., Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture; the Honourable Benarva Browne, Minister of Urban Development, Energy, Seaports, Grenadines Affairs and Local Government; Senator the Honourable Keisal Peters, Minister of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs and Persons with Disabilities; and Mrs. Sandy Peters-Phillips, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Consumer Affairs.

Before the formal presentation, Ambassador MATSUBARA lauded Prime Minister Gonsalves for his contribution to deepening the relations between Japan and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, noting that the Prime Minister was a model statesman and noble leader. Ambassador MATSUBARA then conveyed personal congratulatory messages from His Excellency KISHIDA Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, and Mrs. ABE Akie, the spouse of the late former Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

After accepting the national decoration, Prime Minister Gonsalves expressed his gratitude for receiving such a high honour that is rarely bestowed to sitting Heads of Government. The Honourable Prime Minister further stated that he was truly honoured to receive the award on behalf of himself and the people of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

Prime Minister Gonsalves is the first Vincentian to receive a national decoration from the Government of Japan. The Honourable Prime Minister previously visited Japan in 2004 and 2018, where he successfully engaged with his counterparts and deepened bilateral relations between Japan and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

“The Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun” is the premier decoration under the Order of the Rising Sun, and is one of the highest national decorations awarded to foreign nationals in recognition of their accomplished work in advancing relations between Japan and other countries. Established in 1875, the Order of the Rising Sun was Japan’s first national decoration awarded by the Government of Japan. It features rays of sunlight radiating from the rising sun with an attachment that is fashioned in the shape of a paulownia flower and leaf.

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https://www.tt.emb-japan.go.jp/itprtop_en/index.html



Dr. the Hon. Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, poses after receiving his Japanese national decoration



Prime Minister Gonsalves (centre right), poses with His Excellency MATSUBARA Yutaka, Ambassador of Japan (centre left), Mrs. MATSUBARA and Mrs. Gonsalves



Prime Minister Gonsalves (third from right) and Ambassador MATSUBARA pose for a group photo with Mrs. Gonsalves (right), the Hon. Montgomery Daniel, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Works, Land and Surveys, and Physical Planning (second from right); the Honourable Grenville Williams, Attorney General (fourth from right); the Honourable Carlos James, Esq., Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Sustainable Development and Culture (fourth from left); Mrs. MATSUBARA (third from left); the Honourable Rochelle Forde, Speaker of the House (second from left); and Senator the Honourable Keisal Peters, Minister of National Mobilisation, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs and Persons with Disabilities (left)