

From "the Pearl of Africa" Uganda,

September 2026 Issue (Reiwa 8)

September in Kampala is the rainy season. So far there have been some nights of heavy storms, but relatively gentle rain has continued for the most part.

On September 26, "National Cleaning Day" was held once again. In the capital Kampala, cleaning activities took place across the city from 7:00 to 10:00 in the morning. Efforts in regional cities are also gradually becoming more substantial.



[Scene from the city cleanup]

1. Exchange with Ueno Zoo in Tokyo over the Shoebill

The May issue of this column mentioned that the shoebill, the embassy's mascot, has been active on the embassy's social media. His name is Kotaro.



We learned that the shoebill is very popular at Ueno Zoo in Tokyo. There is even a shoebill shaped ride, and apparently a large number of people are devoted fans of the bird. The shoebill also appears in road safety awareness campaigns, and the Governor of Tokyo, Yuriko Koike

was in the news alongside one as well.

The embassy promptly made contact with Ueno Zoo. We hope to link our respective social media accounts and develop an exchange. In Uganda, shoebills live in the wild, and there are protected areas for them. We received a photo from our friend in Uganda of a rare wild shoebill parent and chick! The photo was posted on X and was viewed by a great many people, garnering over 230,000 views.

We hope that the shoebill will serve as a bridge to broaden the relationship between Japan and Uganda.



[A shoebill parent and chick in Uganda (Photo courtesy of Bic Tours)]

2. Inauguration Ceremony for Roofings group's new plant

The February issue of this column this year introduced the activities of Roofings group, Uganda's largest steel processing manufacturer. On August 25, the company's new facilities were completed, and a commemorative ceremony was held at the Namanve Industrial Park on the outskirts of Kampala, where the company's plant is located.

The guest of honor at the ceremony was President Museveni. Key economic ministers from the Ugandan government attended in full, including the Minister of Trade, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Energy. The ceremony conveyed the Ugandan government's commitment to fostering the manufacturing sector.

From Japan, executives from Nippon Steel and Marubeni Itochu Steel attended the ceremony. Both companies have long done business with Roofings. The President and Roofings Group's Chairman Mr. Lalani both expressed gratitude to the two companies.

Steel consumption in Africa has been rising steadily. Even so, it still falls far short of consumption levels in developed countries. It is clear that basic materials such as steel will be increasingly needed for the overall development of a nation. We hope that sustainable development compatible with environmental conservation will advance here in Uganda as well.



[Scene from the ceremony]

3. Visit to Uganda by Toyota Tsusho Corporation Chairman Akihiko Murakami

Toyota Tsusho operates under the motto "With Africa, For Africa" and is the only major Japanese trading company with a dedicated Africa-focused business division. The company has CFAO, which has strengths in Africa, as a subsidiary, and has built a business network across the entire continent.

Chairman Murakami, who assumed the position in 2022, was visiting Uganda for the first time. On this occasion, he extended his trip from Kenya to Uganda.

Toyota Tsusho's business in Uganda spans a wide range of areas beyond mobility, including healthcare and energy. On this visit, he inspected in particular the progress of transmission and substation projects.

[Note on Uganda's power transmission network development: This is a project aimed at stabilizing and improving the efficiency of Uganda's power supply through protecting and upgrading the power transmission system. Development of transmission networks is progressing not only in the Kampala metropolitan area but also in regional areas. Please also refer to the November 2025 issue of this column.]

Africa presents significant potential alongside real risks — that is the current state of doing business there. The embassy intends to support Toyota Tsusho, a representative Japanese

company that has been achieving steady results in this environment, in its further business development in Africa.



[With members of the Toyota Tsusho Group]

4. Visit by Misako Takahashi, Director-General for African affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Japan

At the end of September, Misako Takahashi, Director-General of the Africa Division, which oversees Japan's Africa diplomacy at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, traveled to Uganda and exchanged views with President Museveni and other Ugandan officials.

Last year, TICAD 9 was held in Yokohama, and Uganda participated with a delegation led by Vice President Alupo. For this year's presidential inauguration in May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister Onishi (at the time) traveled to Uganda and attended the ceremony. Foreign Minister Motegi also visited four African countries in May of this year, including Kenya, Uganda's neighbor, where he explained the evolution of FOIP and announced the three pillars of Japan's Africa diplomacy: "Realizing Africa as a Continent of Peace," "A Virtuous Cycle of Growth between Africa and Japan," and "Realizing a Society Where Everyone Can Experience Prosperity through Co-creation with the Next Generation."

Director-General Takahashi's visit was aimed at developing the relationship with Uganda in the context of these broader developments. She paid a courtesy call on President Museveni, and was able to discuss and share a vision for the overall future direction of the bilateral relationship. The courtesy call, held at the State House, was also attended by Prime Minister Nabbanja and key cabinet ministers, making it a substantive meeting.

Following this visit, we intend to move forward with implementing specific projects.

(End)