





Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge







January 11, 2019 marks the 10th Anniversary of the Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge. The bridge is a 412.7m long cable-stay bridge connecting the major islands of Koror and Babeldaob. It was constructed through a \$25 million Japan Grant Aid Project to replace the prior bridge that collapsed in September, 1996. The Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge was offered as a token of friendship from the People of Japan and symbolizes the long lasting friendship of the two nations.

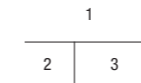
Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge

The photograph to the left is of the Koror-Babeldaob Bridge (KB Bridge) in Palau, an island country located in the western Pacific Ocean. It is the main artery connecting the country's two main islands: Koror Island, home to the former national capital (also called Koror), and Babeldaob Island, the largest island in the archipelago, where the airfield, power station, and other major facilities are located.

The original KB Bridge was built in 1977. In September 1996, a horrible accident occurred. The bridge abruptly collapsed, resulting in several fatalities. Besides being the primary means of transportation between the two islands, the bridge carried electrical and water lines from Babeldaob to Koror. The collapse severely disrupted the infrastructure of the city of Koror, where 70 percent of the population of Palau resides, and dramatically affected their daily lives and their primary industry—tourism.

The government of Palau installed a floating bridge as a temporary replacement and at the same time asked Japan to help build a new bridge. Japan responded by providing grant aid for the construction, which began in November 1999. The new bridge was completed six years later, in 2002. The people of Palau named it the Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge, and a plaque with the name inscribed was placed at each end.

We are glad that the people of Palau asked for Japan's aid in their time of need, and that we could help them rebuild the life-sustaining infrastructure that we take for granted, enabling them to return to their lives as before.



1. View of the Japan-Palau Friendship Bridge from Koror Island. The waterway under the bridge is frequently used for recreational activities such as diving and sightseeing boat tours. The bridge was designed to allow relatively large ships to pass under it. 2. The original bridge that collapsed in 1996. Afterward, people were forced to use barges and a temporary floating bridge to travel between the islands. This disrupted the daily lives of the islanders and economic activities until the bridge was rebuilt. In the photograph, the temporary bridge can be seen behind the collapsed bridge. 3. Commemorative stamps issued to celebrate the bridge's tenth anniversary. Beautiful commemorative stamps were also issued when the bridge was completed.

KB Bridge 🔍