A LAND OF PROMISE IN SOUTH AMERICA

Not widely known by most people, Bolivia is home to a thriving Japanese community, which traces its roots back more than 60 years. Since the 1950s, the Bolivians of Japanese ancestry have contributed to the growth of the country's economy and have made their mark in their adopted land.

With financial assistance from the Japanese government, these immigrant communities established the colonies of San Juan de Yapacani, Pueblo Nissei and Colinas del Urubo in homage to their ancestors’ homelands in the eastern lands of Bolivia, where they engaged in growing crops and raising livestock.

Because of the connection, Japan was among the first countries to form a partnership with Bolivia’s government in its national development projects, particularly in infrastructure, natural resources, power generation and water projects.

One example of Japanese-Bolivian cooperation was the Viru Viru International Airport in Santa Cruz, built in 1970 with a Japanese loan and subsequent technical assistance. The airport has since been expanded and improved, making it a key transportation hub.

According to Ambassador Kyoko Koga of Japan’s Embassy in Tokyo, “The most relevant Japanese presence here is Minera Promin, a joint venture with construction giant Nissho Iwai. And in 2017, the new Viru Viru International Airport was inaugurated.”

In addition to building infrastructure, Japanese companies have also contributed to the country’s mining sector. The Bolivian government has encouraged private investment in various economic sectors. It also offers varied commercial opportunities in the hydrocarbon sector, and has enacted a law to promote investment of the Plurinational State of Bolivia in developing projects related to the exploration of hydrocarbons.

Bolivia is located on different geological structures, and its mining potential is greater due to the fact that Bolivia is located on different geological structures and boasts a variety of mineral deposits. For example, Bolivia is the world’s largest producer of zinc and copper, and the world’s largest producer of silver.

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