A VISIT to JAPAN

- Like The Bahamas, Japan is made up of many islands (it's an **archipelago**).
- Japan lies in the western part of the North Pacific Ocean, off the east coast of the mainland of Asia.
- Japan has many mountains, volcanoes, plains and earthquakes.
- It has a population of about **127 million** people.
- Its **capital city** is **Tokyo**. **Currency** (money): ***Yen***
- Japan **manufactures** electronics like radios and televisions as well as cars and ships.
- Its companies include: Honda, Nissan, Toshiba, Toyota and Sony.
- Its national sports are *Karate*, judo and sumo wrestling.
- Earthquakes are frequent in Japan, so many of the tall buildings are made with steel because it bends during the earthquake tremors. Many smaller houses are made of concrete so that there isn't a lot of debris.
- Volcanic eruptions and *Tsunamis* are also common in Japan.
- In traditional homes, there are no beds, only ***futons*** (mattress) because the homes are small.
- The floors are covered with straw matting called ***Tatami***.
- It is Japanese custom to take off your shoes when entering a home.
- In the rooms of these Japanese homes, ***fusuma*** are used as partitions, and are made from wood and paper.
- Modern Japanese homes have tiled floors and beds.
- Japanese festivals include the **Iris Festival** or **Children's Day** celebrated on **May 5th**. They also celebrate New Year's Day by exchanging gifts.
- Because of the many mountains, there is very little land for farming.
- There are paddy fields on which farmers grow rice.
- ***Mochi*** also called **rice cake**, is a special cake made from early harvested rice.
- ***Kimono*** is a long loose gown worn by men and women on special occasions.
- The kimono is tied in the middle with a wide sash called an ***obi***.

