

We Are *Tomodachi*

Spring 2014



The Government of Japan

We Are *Tomodachi*
Spring 2014

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Fukushima



“There are some children in the disaster areas who will celebrate their third birthday tomorrow. These are the children who were born on the very day of the earthquake disaster.

The progress in the growth of this generation, who will be in their fourth year of elementary school six years from now, can also truly be regarded as our progress towards reconstruction.

In 2020, I would like to invite to the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games as many children as possible, including those in the disaster areas who will be in their fourth year of elementary school, who may properly be called ‘symbols of reconstruction.’

I would like them to show people all throughout Japan, and people around the world, how they have grown. At the same time, I want the scenes of the world’s athletes giving a great showing to make a lasting imprint within their sparkling eyes.

Fifty years ago, watching the Tokyo Olympics left a profound impression on me, a fourth year elementary student at the time. I still remember it even now.

I very much hope to have the children who will carve out the future, both from the disaster areas and from around Japan, experience that profound inspiration for themselves.”

From Press Conference by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on the Upcoming Third Anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake (Opening Statement), March 10, 2014

Kokorozashi



“It is the responsibility of our generation to rebuild a robust Japanese economy in which young people are able to believe that the future will be bright.

We will vigorously launch the ‘three prongs’ of economic revival, namely bold monetary policy, flexible fiscal policy, and a growth strategy that encourages private sector investment.

We will be unable to deal with the dramatically changing global economy if we employ the same methods we have used until now.

Japan’s economic growth depends on our will and our courage to set out to sea and sail without hesitation through the rough waves of the megacompetition encompassing the globe.”

From Policy Speech by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to the 183rd Session of the Diet, February 28, 2013

This character, *kokorozashi*, represents a strong will to carry out one’s convictions.

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Cherry Blossoms (*Sakura*) in Spring



The Waterfall Cherry Tree (*Takizakura*) of Miharu

This giant “waterfall cherry tree” (*Pendula rosea*) in Miharu, Fukushima Prefecture, is thought to be over a thousand years old. A designated national natural treasure, it is also one of three giant cherry trees of note in Japan, along with the Usuzumi cherry tree in Motosu, Gifu Prefecture, and Jindai cherry tree in Hokuto, Yamanashi Prefecture. Standing strong, and alone atop a small hill in the disaster-stricken Tohoku region, it projects an image of hope and inspiration for all who see it.

In Japan spring means the arrival of the cherry blossom season. It starts in January, when flowers begin to bloom in Okinawa, and continues until mid-May, moving northward along the length of the Japanese archipelago until reaching Hokkaido. When you make Japanese friends, ask them where their favorite spots are for viewing cherry blossoms. Everyone has his or her own favorite place. Come and visit Japan during the cherry blossom season. An unforgettable experience awaits you.



Cherry Blossoms at Night on Shirakawa Canal, Gion in Kyoto

One charming thing about cherry blossoms is the way they take on a different appearance at night. In the historic Gion district of Kyoto, Shirakawa Canal is famous for its nightviewing of cherry blossoms in an atmospheric and elegant setting, where the latticed doors of merchants' houses evoke the rich past of the area. A total of forty-three weeping cherry and Yoshino cherry trees lining the canal are illuminated from March 28 to April 6 between 6 pm and 10 pm, beckoning visitors into a mysterious, dreamy world.

Major Cherry Blossom Festivals

On the previous page we wrote, “When you make Japanese friends, ask them where their favorite spots are for viewing cherry blossoms.” Since you are our *tomodachi* (friends), we would like to tell you about some nice places that are famous for their cherry blossoms. Also, when you come to Japan in spring, please pay attention to the forecast released annually about the timing of cherry trees blooming. Reports are broadcast to inform people where and when the cherry blossoms will be at their best. You can ask people around you, or, if you inquire at your hotel, the staff there will surely tell you. We hope that you will have the opportunity to enjoy the wonderful cherry blossoms so beloved by the Japanese people, and that you will come to love them too!



Fuji Kawaguchiko, Yamanashi Prefecture

The Fuji Kawaguchiko Cherry Blossom Festival, held from April 12 to April 20, prides itself on about 300 Yoshino cherry trees that bloom beautifully along the roads around the lake, including the north shore Kohoku View Line, the lake's northern banks, and Ubugasaki, which is famous for the “Upside-Down Fuji” (the perfect reflection of Mount Fuji in the lake). The triple-delight landscape of cherry blossoms, the lake, and Mount Fuji, viewed from Lake Kawaguchiko's north shore, allows you to appreciate the beauty of Japan all at once.



Hatsukaichi, Hiroshima Prefecture

Miyajima of Hatsukaichi is one of the so-called three most famous landscapes of Japan, along with Matsushima in Miyagi Prefecture and Amanohashidate in Kyoto Prefecture. Although no festival is held, about 1,600 cherry trees bloom on the entire island of Miyajima, heralding the spring. On the premises of the Itsukushima Shinto Shrine, in the vicinity of the pagoda or the Museum of Treasures located on the western hill, you can enjoy a splendid view of the “floating” Torii Gate through Yoshino cherry blossoms when they are in full bloom.



Joetsu, Niigata Prefecture

At present, there are about 4,000 cherry trees in Takadajo Park (located on the ruins of Takada Castle), which has long been a famous spot for cherry blossoms. Along the “Sakura Road,” a cherry tree-lined street that is lit up at night by 3,000 paper lanterns, the blossoms are reflected in the moat. This is also one of the three most famous spots in Japan for viewing cherry blossoms at night. From April 4 to April 20, many events, including shows, are held, and over 300 open-air stalls line the street.



Aizu Wakamatsu, Fukushima Prefecture

From April 11 to May 6, the entire historic site is scheduled to be illuminated, and this will be the largest event of its kind in eastern Japan. Visitors will be able to enjoy nighttime cherry blossom viewing, chosen as one of the 100 best in Japan. Moreover, since visitors will be allowed to climb up to the castle's tower at night during the cherry blossom season, they will be able to enjoy looking down over 1,000 cherry trees. Sacred palanquins parade amid the trees in full bloom during the Sakura Festival, which is usually held in mid-April.



Satte, Saitama Prefecture

Approximately 1,000 Yoshino cherry trees, in a line extending for one kilometer, stand along the banks of the Gongendo river and hang over the road, forming a tunnel. Rapeseed flowers (*na no hana*) grow next to the embankment. The contrast between the pale pink of the cherry trees and the yellow of the rapeseed flowers overwhelms the viewer with its beauty! From March 26 to April 10 (a schedule depending on the state of the cherry blossoms), about 100 open-air stalls line the area, and many events are held.



Ina, Nagano Prefecture

This is one of the most famous sites in Japan for cherry blossom viewing, long referred to as “the best cherry trees in the world.” The trees that grow in Takato are called *takatoko-higan* and are distinguished by reddish blossoms that are smaller than those of the Yoshino cherry variety. The Sakura Festival is held from April 1 to April 30. When the cherry trees are in full bloom in mid-April, the entire park seems to be dyed light red. Over 250,000 tourists visit annually to enjoy the blossoms.

Cherry Blossom Forecasts

The map illustrates dates that cherry blossoms begin to bloom in each area. There are some differences each year depending on weather and other conditions.

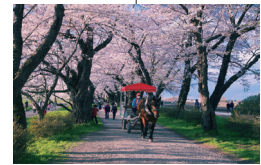
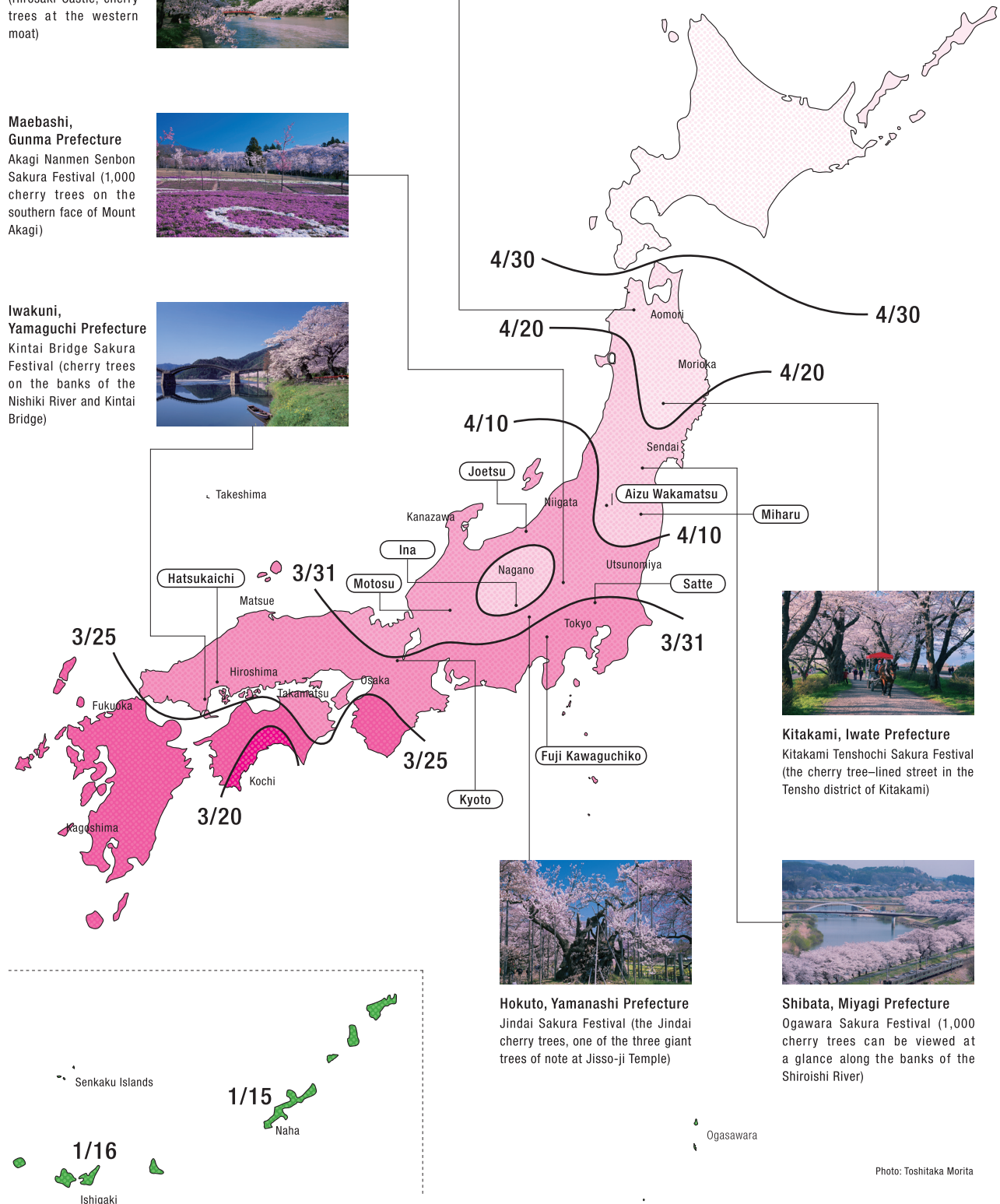
**Hirosaki,
Aomori Prefecture**
Hirosaki Sakura Festival
(Hirosaki Castle, cherry
trees at the western
moat)



**Maebashi,
Gunma Prefecture**
Akagi Nanmen Senbon
Sakura Festival (1,000
cherry trees on the
southern face of Mount
Akagi)



**Iwakuni,
Yamaguchi Prefecture**
Kintai Bridge Sakura
Festival (cherry trees
on the banks of the
Nishiki River and Kintai
Bridge)



Kitakami, Iwate Prefecture
Kitakami Tenshochi Sakura Festival
(the cherry tree-lined street in the
Tensho district of Kitakami)



Hokuto, Yamanashi Prefecture
Jindai Sakura Festival (the Jindai
cherry trees, one of the three giant
trees of note at Jisso-ji Temple)



Shibata, Miyagi Prefecture
Ogawara Sakura Festival (1,000
cherry trees can be viewed at
a glance along the banks of the
Shiroishi River)

Photo: Toshitaka Morita



Moments of the Prime Minister 2013 to 2014



These photographs are a record of the various meetings of Prime Minister Abe since he assumed the highest office in December 2012. The prime minister has been able to meet with the leaders of many countries and discuss a variety of issues with them. He expressed his gratitude to the people who kindly greeted him all around the world.

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3	4
	5

1. Shaking hands with the U.S. President Barack Obama during a Japan-United States Summit Meeting, February 2013. 2. The prime minister walking with other leaders at the G8 Lough Erne Summit, in Northern Ireland, June 2013. 3. Many leaders from Africa visited Japan for the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) held in Yokohama in June 2013. 4. Offering a silent prayer at the African Union headquarters for the late South African president, Nelson Mandela, January 2014. 5. Promoting Japanese cuisine at the Business Forum held in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates, May 2013.



1.Summit Meeting with President Benigno Aquino III during a visit to the Philippines, July 2013. 2.The prime minister offering greetings during an awards ceremony at the Hudson Institute, a think tank in Washington, DC, September 2013. 3.A group photograph taken at the Leaders Meeting during the East Asia Summit Meeting, October 2013. 4.The prime minister and Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the honor guard, part of the welcoming ceremony at the Japan-Turkey Summit Meeting, January 2014. 5.The prime minister being welcomed at the airport by Prime Minister Hailemariam Desalegn during a visit to Ethiopia, January 2014.

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Prime Minister Abe has been welcomed by many children in each country that he has visited. They sometimes greet him by waving Japanese flags and wearing ethnic dress. They sometimes even play tug of war with him. We hope that they will grow up healthy and strong, and we look forward to the day that they come to visit Japan.

1.The prime minister was greeted by many children holding flags during a welcoming ceremony in Myanmar, May 2013. 2.The prime minister meeting members of national women's basketball team in Mozambique, where he was given a uniform with his name inscribed on it, January 2014. 3.Abe Cup, judo competition named after the prime minister was held in Côte d'Ivoire in May 2013. At the venue, he was approached for a handshake by a veritable legion of children. 4.Greeted by children looking sharp in their ethnic garments at a welcoming ceremony in Mongolia, March 2013. 5.At an elementary school in Let Yet San village in Myanmar, the prime minister played tug of war with the children, May 2013. 6.Beautifully dressed children welcoming the prime minister and his wife with bouquets at the airport in Côte d'Ivoire, January 2014.

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1.Receiving a letter from children during his observation tour of public housing for disaster victims in Miyagi Prefecture, July 2013. 2.The prime minister is seen helping to promote the recovery of the oyster industry by sampling some oysters at a new oyster-processing plant in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture which suffered considerable damage from the Great East Japan Earthquake, December 2013. 3.In July 2013, the prime minister is seen offering prayers for the people who died in the area devastated by the tsunami that hit Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture on March 11, 2011. 4.With diplomats resident in Tokyo from various Muslim countries at the iftar (the evening meal to break the fast) held by the Prime Minister at the close of Ramadan. The kimonoed man on the prime minister's left is Osunaarashi from Egypt, the first sumo wrestler from Africa and from a Muslim country in professional sumo, Japan's national sport, July 2013.





It is important for the government not only to offer support for the reconstruction of the disaster-hit regions but also to venture to those areas to listen to what the local people have to say and to encourage them. Moreover, promoting the recovering industries to both Japan and the world is another important mission. Prime Minister Abe does not simply take an active leadership role but he also visits the disaster-struck areas, observes the current situation with his own eyes and walks hand-in-hand with the locals.

1.Observing the state of damage to Izu-Oshima Island, a part of greater Tokyo, which was hard hit by heavy rains, October 2013. 2.Rice paddies that took in seawater damage from the tsunami of March 2011 in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture, have been restored. Here the prime minister rides a rice transplanter to help with planting the paddies, May 2013. 3.Offering encouragement to local staff during his visit to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. He also observed the reactor that was undergoing demolition, September 2013 4.Visiting a shelter for displaced persons during his observational tour of the great rainstorm damage in Izu-Oshima, October 2013.

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THE WORLD



“Abenomics” Is Progressing!

Making the Impossible Possible

WORLD
ECONOMIC

“Abenomics” Is Progressing! Making the Impossible Possible

Breaking Through Barriers

Awaking from a deep sleep, you look out the window and see that the sky is pink. Is it sunrise or sunset? At first, you might not be sure.

For many years, people were talking about Japan as the land of the setting sun, a country that had passed its prime and was in decline. The economic mood was gloomy, and the combination of persistent deflation and an overvalued currency made it seem highly unlikely that the country would ever rise again.

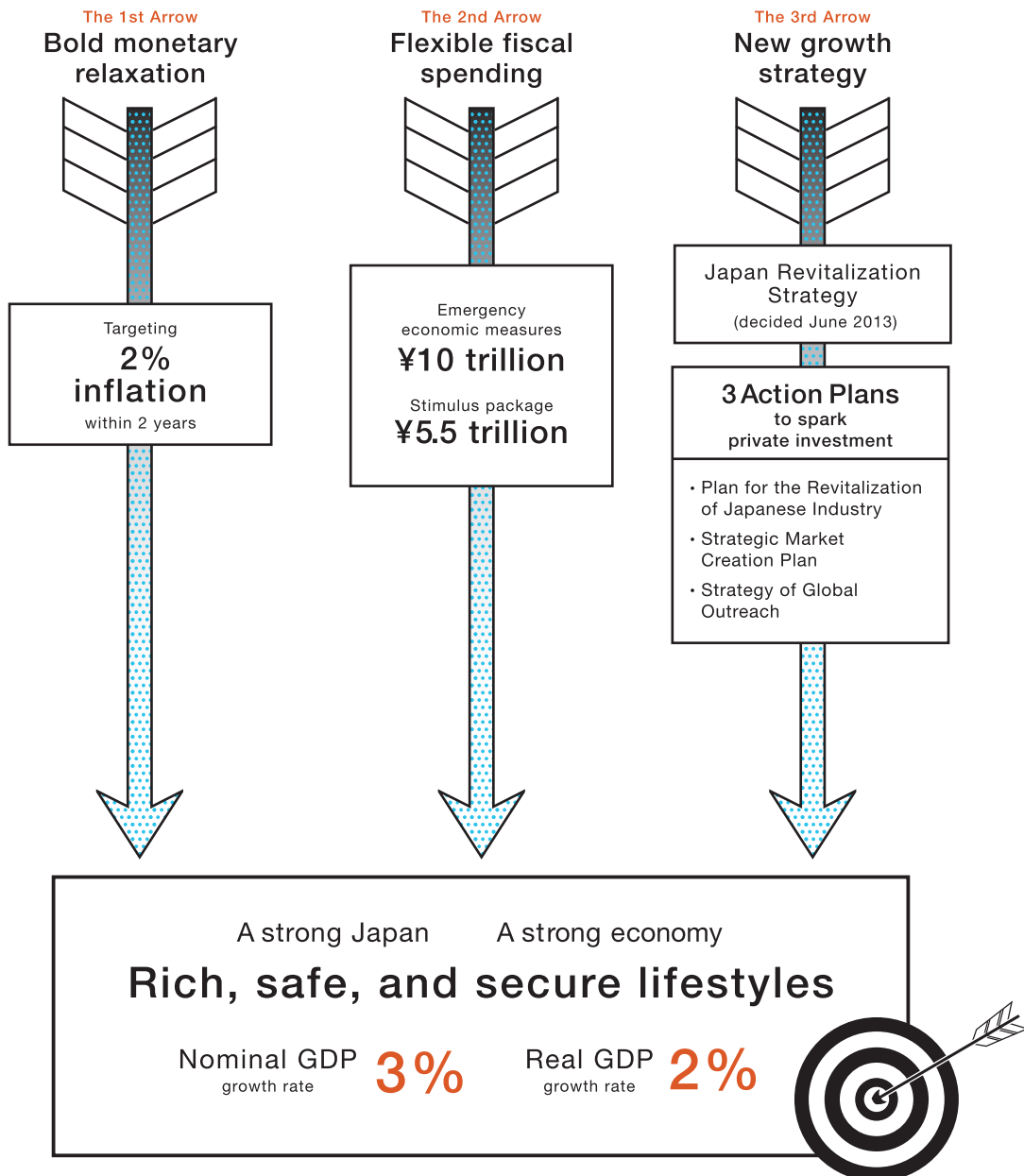
Late in 2012, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took office with a different message, promising to “take Japan back” to being the land of the rising sun. He immediately launched a drive to banish deflation and deal with the labor force reduction that is resulting from the low birthrate and aging of the population. Abe undertook to promote economic growth while cutting the fiscal deficit with a program that was soon dubbed “Abenomics,” which consists of what he called “three arrows”: 1) bold monetary relaxation; 2) flexible application of fiscal stimulus; and 3) a growth strategy to spark private investment.

In January 2013, less than a month after taking power, Abe shot off the first arrow, bold loosening of monetary policy. The Bank of Japan (BOJ) and the government issued a joint statement expressing their commitment to an inflation target of 2%. The BOJ followed up in April with the adoption of a framework for new quantitative and qualitative monetary relaxation. Haruhiko Kuroda, appointed by Abe as the central bank’s new governor, repeatedly stressed his commitment to achieving the 2% target. Thanks to the combination of clear words and firm deeds, the Japanese economy has made steady progress toward overcoming the deflation that dogged it for many years.

Also in January 2013, Abe shot his second arrow, flexible application of fiscal stimulus. His administration adopted a set of “Urgent Economic Countermeasures for the Revival of the Japanese Economy” involving ¥10 trillion in additional expenditure by the government and ¥20 trillion in total spending, including funds from local governments and the private sector. In October, the prime minister decided to go ahead with raising the consumption tax from 5% to 8% beginning in April 2014, a move aimed at improving the nation’s fiscal health. This is expected to cause a temporary downturn in consumer spending, and so in December the administration decided to put together another stimulus package, consisting of ¥5.5 trillion in government outlays and total spending of ¥18.6 trillion. Meanwhile, the government was able to cut the volume of new bond issues in the budget for fiscal 2014 by about ¥1.6 trillion, and the target of

The 3 Arrows of Abenomics

20 years of stagnation	Long-term stagnation and deflation	Nominal GDP growth rate	-0.2%
	Delay in structural change	Real GDP growth rate	0.8%
	High levels of public debt	GNI growth rate	0.6%



halving the deficit in the primary balance as a percentage of gross domestic product by fiscal 2015 now appears to be within reach.

The third arrow of Abenomics is a growth strategy to spark private investment, with a focus on regulatory reform. If we liken the first arrow to turning on the ignition of Japan's rusty economic engine and the second arrow to stepping on the accelerator to give the engine gas, we might say that the third arrow is breaking through a barricade. The administration secured enactment of nine pieces of legislation for this purpose in last autumn's extraordinary session of the National Diet; it plans to seek prompt passage of about 30 more related bills in the current Diet session.

Abe Drills Through the Bedrock of Vested Interests

Prime Minister Abe has called himself "a man with a drill," likening Japan's vested interests to bedrock and declaring that, "over the next two years, no vested interests will remain immune to my drill."

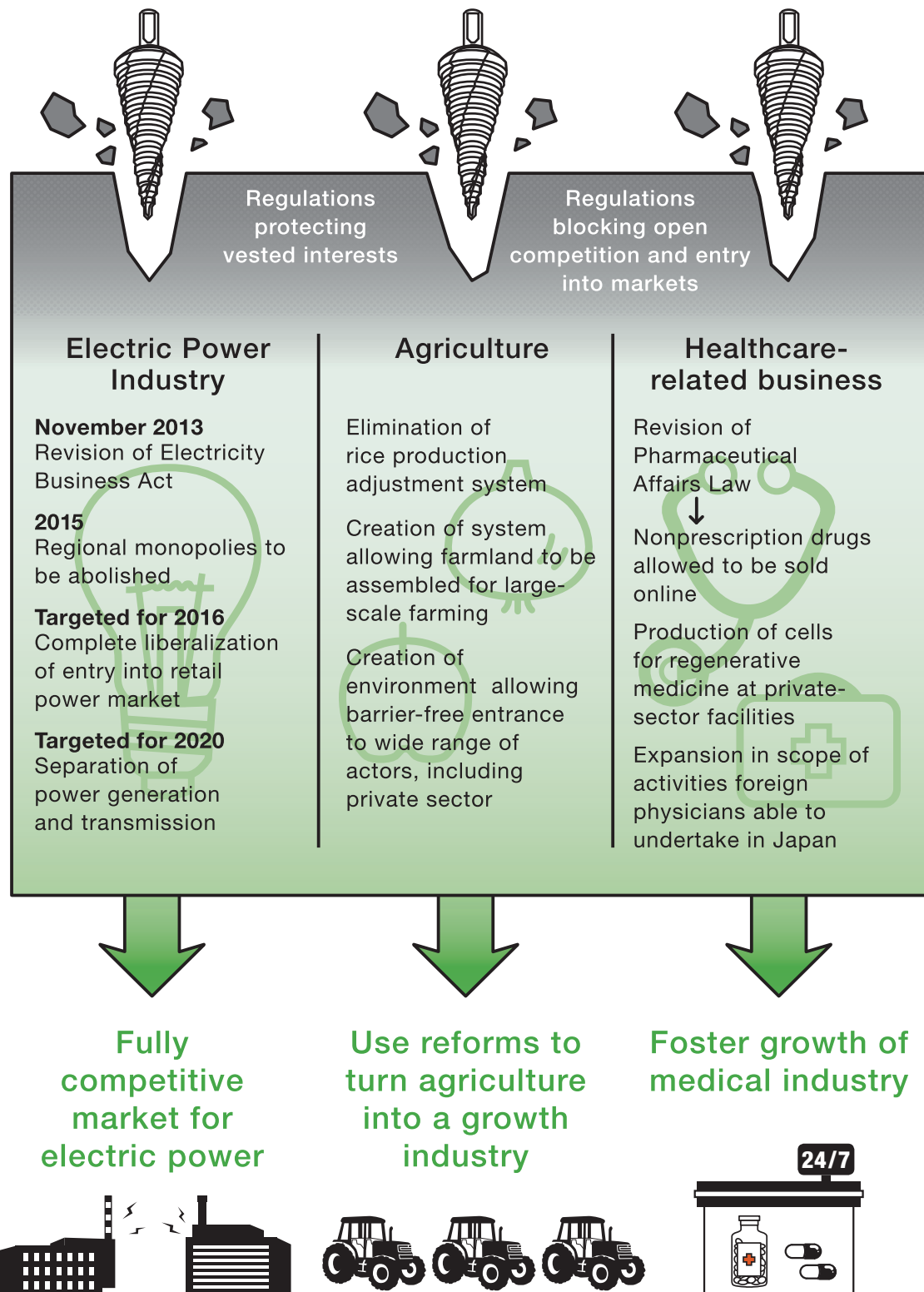
Under a law enacted last autumn, the system of regional monopolies in the electric power industry—considered a prime example of bedrock regulation—will be abolished by 2015. And the prime minister's drill will continue to cut through the bedrock in this field with further legislative initiatives to effect complete liberalization of entry into retail power transmission, targeted for 2016, and separation of power generation and transmission, targeted for 2020. The aim is to create a fully competitive market for electric power.

Reform is also progressing in the field of agriculture, which has been seen as another major hurdle. The government has decided to eliminate the rice production adjustment system (*gentan*) that has been in effect for over 40 years and to create a system to allow plots of farmland to be combined for large-scale farming. And it is aiming to relax controls so as to allow barrier-free entry to the agricultural sector, thereby turning it into a market where private-sector corporations can strive to hone their competitive strengths.

In addition, the Abe administration intends to improve the environment for healthcare-related businesses. It has already secured passage of a revision of the Pharmaceutical Affairs Law to allow virtually all nonprescription drugs to be sold online. In the field of regenerative medicine, in which Japan is a leader, new legislation will facilitate swift and safe practical use of regenerative technologies; in the future, private-sector plants will be allowed to generate cells for this purpose. And the administration is working toward expansion of the scope of activities in which foreign physicians may participate in Japan, along with the introduction of advanced forms of medical treatment.

All these were areas of bedrock regulation, long considered impossible to break. But Abe's drill has already broken through some of them, and it is continuing to spin as the prime minister strives to get through the remaining ones over the coming two years.

Breaking Through the Bedrock of Regulations and Vested Interests



Creating an Attractive Market and Improving the Environment for Innovation

The Abe administration is taking other moves to open up the Japanese market and make Japan a more attractive place to do business.

With the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the proposed Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with the European Union, Japan will be able to take part to a greater extent in the international flow of goods, capital, and intellectual property. Currently only 19% of Japan's trade is covered by free trade agreements; the government aims to raise this share to 70% by 2018.

Meanwhile, Japan needs to make its system of corporate taxes competitive by international standards. The combined rate of national and local taxes on corporate income is due to be lowered by 2.4% points in April, and the government has also introduced tax incentives to promote investment in highly productive equipment and to encourage corporations to use their cash reserves for capital investment, research and development, and wage increases. Additional reforms of corporate taxation will be undertaken during 2014.

On the financial front, last autumn the government came up with a plan to improve the investment and risk management of public and quasi-public assets, such as those of the Government Pension Investment Fund (GPIF). The forward-looking reforms implemented in keeping with this plan will bring a major change to Japan's fund management. On the fund-raising side, this spring the government plans to submit a bill to the Diet to make it easier for enterprises to raise capital by promoting the use of crowd funding. And it is promoting the appointment of outside directors to corporate boards so as to strengthen corporate governance and support proactive management.

The Abe administration is also moving to boost Japan's R&D power with the establishment of a Cross-ministerial Strategic Innovation Promotion Program (SIP) that will operate across the divisions among bureaucratic institutions and business fields and an Impulsing Paradigm Change Through Disruptive Technologies (ImpACT) program that will promote high-risk, high-impact R&D.

In addition, this spring "national strategic special zones" will be launched. The purpose of this new arrangement is to create hubs for international business and activities in fields like medical care and agriculture. It is expected that the new zones will promote the creation of an attractive environment for business with the relaxation of regulations on floor area ratios (building height) and urban planning controls, along with labor market reforms based on the drafting of new guidelines for employment rules. Deeper deregulation will be considered in line with the particular needs of the designated areas.

Of course, there are still some concerns about Japan's future. One is the issue of the country's low birthrate and aging population. How can Japan find the human resources to support

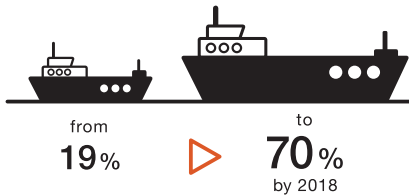
Major Policies in the Growth Strategy



Photo: Yonhap/Aflo

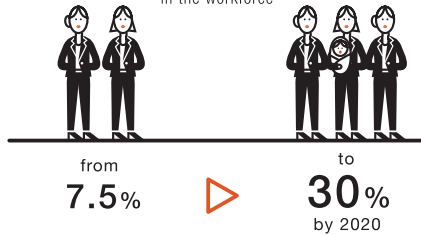
Take fuller part in international flow of goods and capital

Raise proportion of trade covered by FTAs



Support advancement of women in the workforce

Improve female participation in the workforce

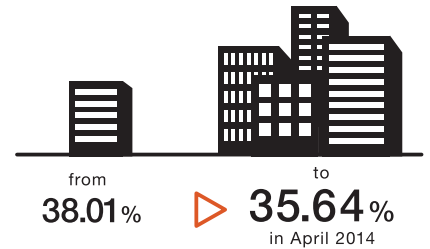


(Managerial positions held by women in private companies with over 100 employees)

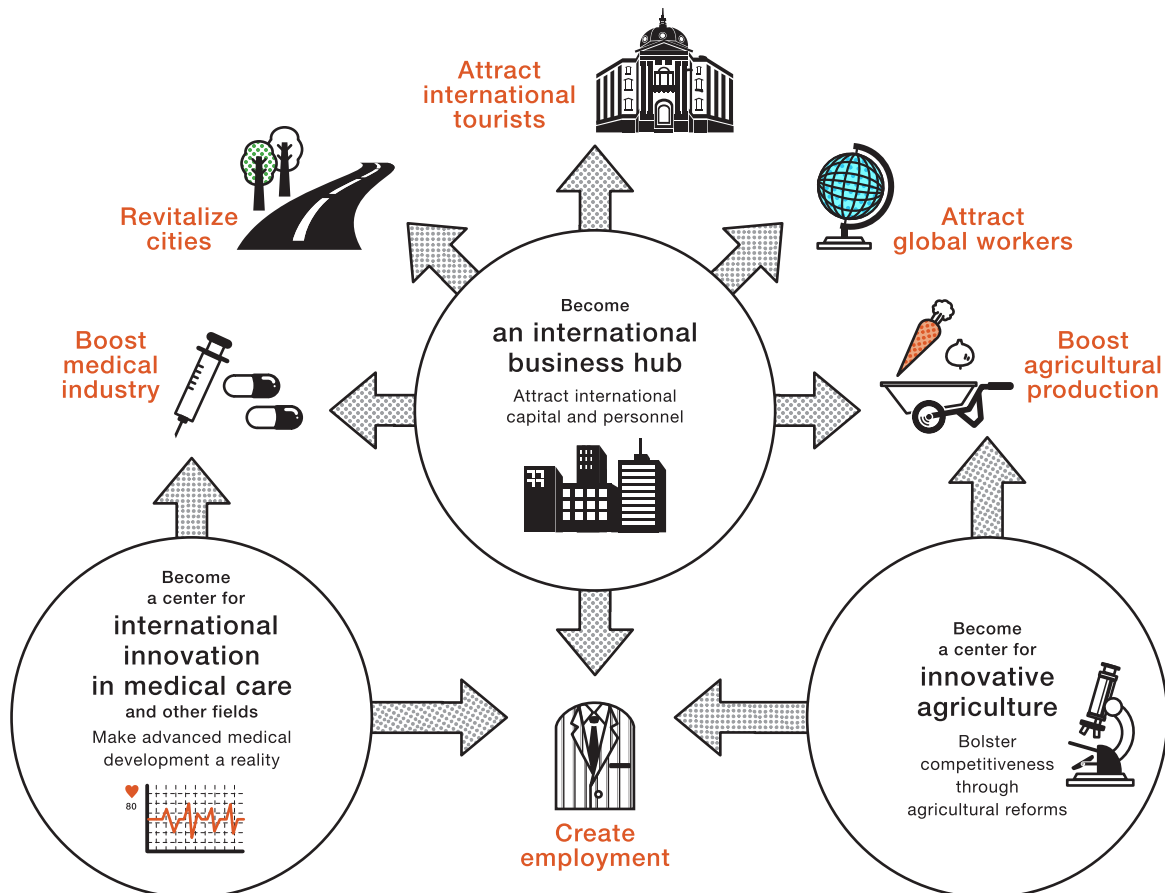


Create the world's most business-friendly environment

Lower the effective corporate tax rate



National Strategic Special Zones



its growth? One answer is to encourage talented foreigners to come to Japan. And another promising avenue is “womenomics”—tapping the tremendous latent potential of Japan’s women. In order to allow women to shine as leading players in their workplaces, the government has been moving to improve the child-care support package and is offering assistance and tax breaks to encourage companies to tap women’s potential. The government is taking the initiative in promoting more women to management posts, and it is encouraging business corporations to do the same, with a target of raising the share of women in leadership positions to 30% by 2020. As Hillary Clinton told Prime Minister Abe, if women’s participation in the workforce were raised to the same level as men’s, Japan’s GDP would increase by 16%. So Japan still has plenty of untapped power.

Japan’s Renewed Positive View of the Future

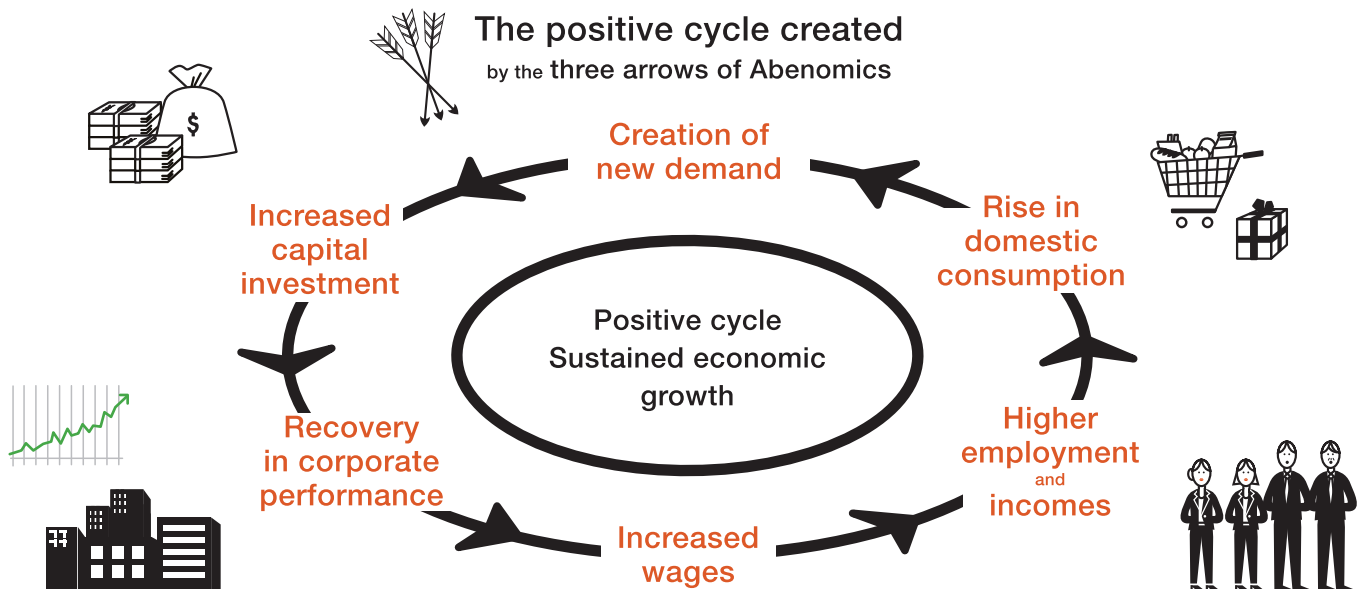
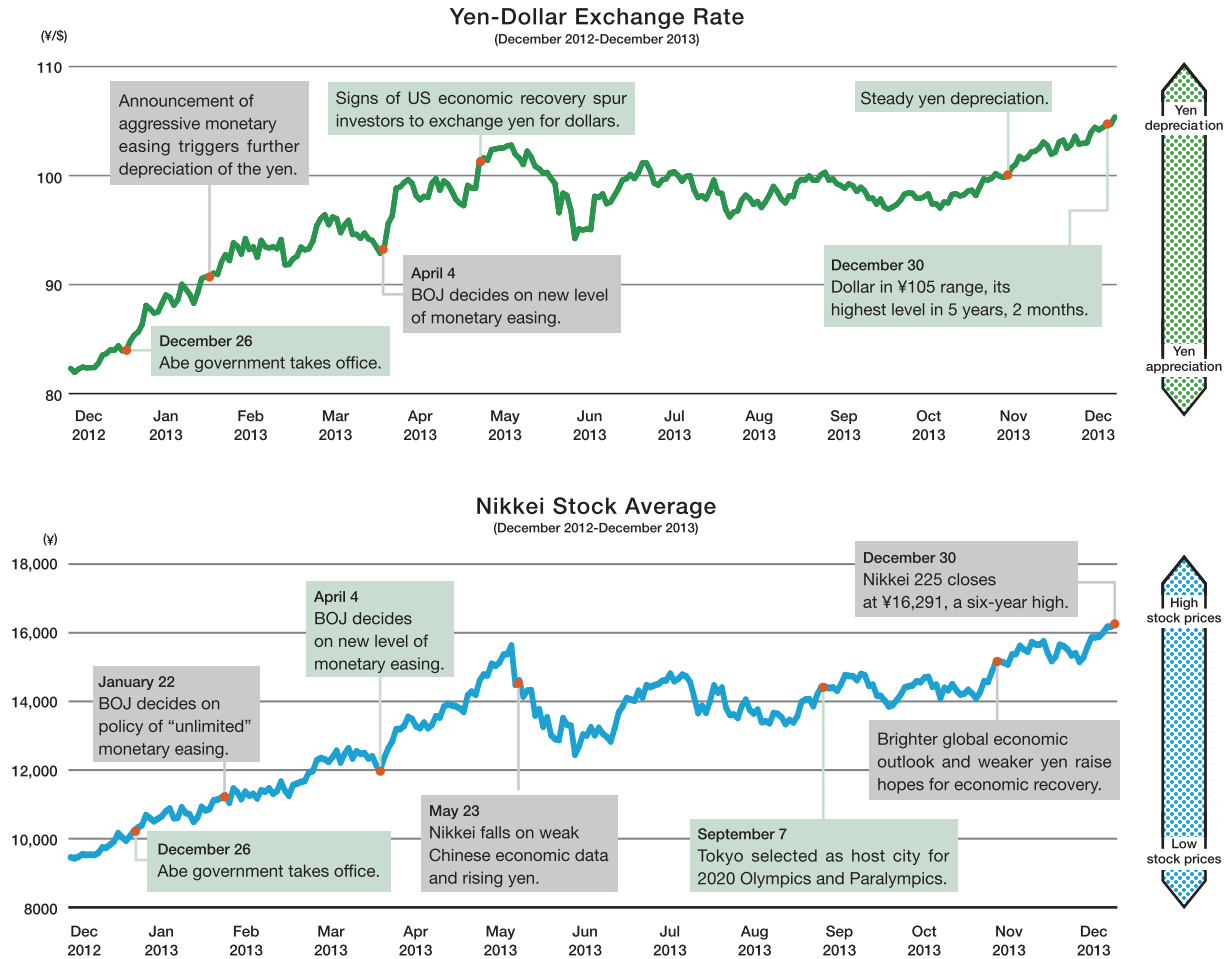
Earlier attempts to implement reforms aimed at vested interests in Japan generated loud opposition from the business world, the media, and others. But this time the response is quite different. Over the past year, Abenomics has produced a string of positive results, and it is widely supported by the public. The policies implemented by the Abe administration have been promoting a positive cycle of improved economic performance and increased confidence. The end of the deflationary spiral is finally in sight, and there are now hopes that businesses will raise wages. Abe and his team are working to ensure that the improvement in the economy is felt by people throughout the country.

In addition to spreading the gains throughout the country, it will also be important to put public finances on an even keel and promote confidence in the sustainability of the social security system. This will make it possible to achieve further progress in banishing deflation and putting the economy on a positive track. The Abe administration intends to keep up its efforts to address the remaining issues and accelerate the favorable trends.

The Japanese people now seem to be orienting themselves in favor of reform. This may be a reflection of the paradigm shift caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake (March 2011). Over the three years since this disaster, the nation has undertaken an all-out drive to rebuild and recover. And now the Japanese are finding a new sense of purpose, most notably from Tokyo’s successful bid to host the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics. We can sense a more positive mood—a readiness to build the future without fear of failure, to work at making dreams come true.

The economic engine of Japan has revved up, and the gas is flowing. It is ready to zoom forward. Meanwhile the prime minister’s drill is continuing to turn, breaking through remaining barriers. Abenomics is progressing, making the impossible possible.

The Effects of Abenomics





Prime Minister Shinzo Abe Actively Engages in Dialogue

After Prime Minister Shinzo Abe inaugurated his administration, he took stock of the world situation and began to actively engage with other countries both abroad and in Japan. In the course of the last twelve months or so, he has held dialogues with many world leaders while also tackling domestic issues in an appropriate manner.

December 26, 2012

The second Abe Cabinet was inaugurated and Shinzo Abe became the 96th Prime Minister

January 16, 2013

Visited Viet Nam

January 17

Visited Thailand

January 18

Visited Indonesia

February 21-24

Visited the United States of America

March 30 - 31

Visited Mongolia

April 29

Visited Russia

April 30 - May 1

Visited Saudi Arabia

May 1- 2

Visited the United Arab Emirates

May 3

Visited Turkey

May 24 - 26

Visited Myanmar

June 3

The Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) was held in Yokohama

June 15 - 16

Visited Poland

June 17 - 18

Attended the G8 Summit in Lough Erne, Northern Ireland

June 19

Visited Ireland and Great Britain

July 25 - 26

Visited Malaysia

July 26

Visited Singapore

July 26 - 27

Visited the Philippines

August 24 - 25

Visited Bahrain

August 26

Visited Kuwait

August 27

Visited Djibouti

August 28

Visited Qatar

September 5 - 6

Attended the G20 Summit in St.Petersburg, Russia

September 6 - 7

Attended the IOC Session in Argentina
Tokyo was selected to hold the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics

September 24

Visited Canada

September 26

Attended the United Nations General Assembly, United States of America

October 7 - 8

Attended the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, Indonesia

October 9 - 10

Attended ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, Brunei

October 28 - 30

Visited Turkey

November 16

Visited Cambodia

November 17

Visited Laos

December 14

The ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting was held in Tokyo

January 9 - 10, 2014

Visited Oman

January 10 -11

Visited Côte d'Ivoire

January 11 - 13

Visited Mozambique

January 13 -14

Visited Ethiopia

January 21 - 23

Attended the World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland

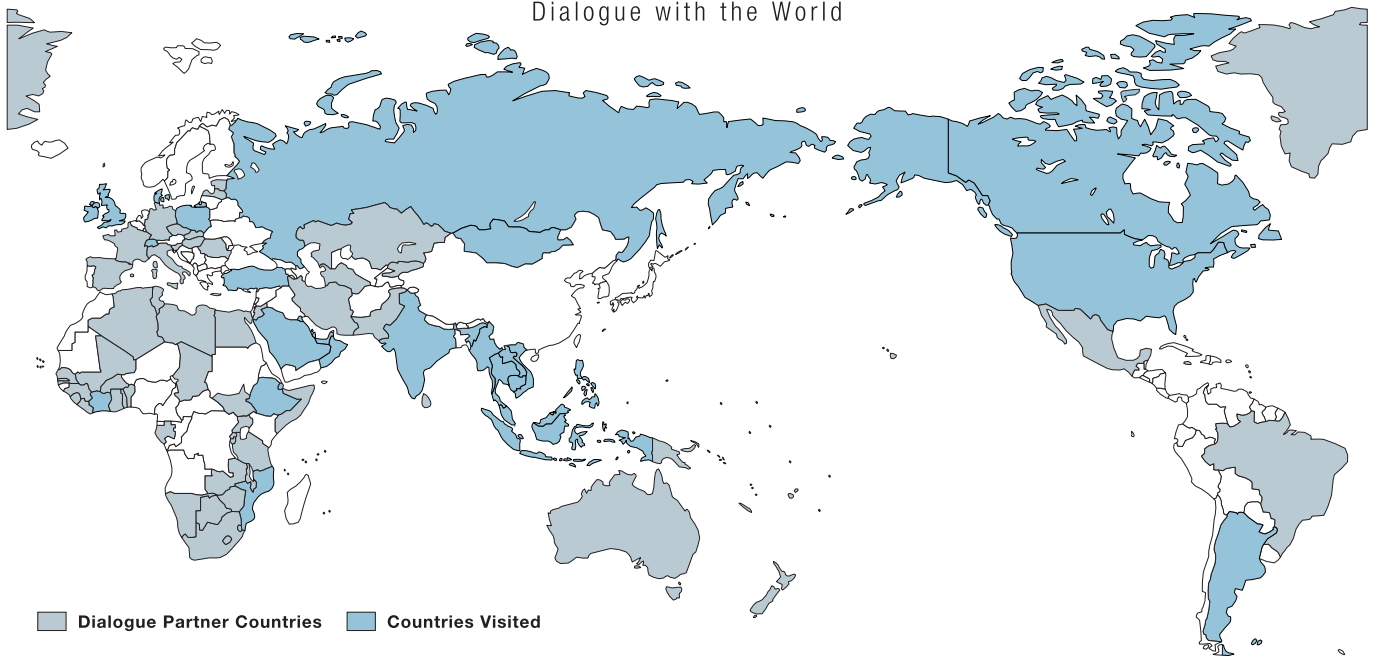
January 25 - 27

Visited India

February 7 - 8

Attended the Opening Ceremony of the Sochi Olympics, Russia

Dialogue with the World



As of March 17

Dialogue Partner Countries ★ Countries Visited

(Asia)

- ★ Brunei
- ★ Cambodia
- ★ India
- ★ Indonesia
- ★ Laos
- ★ Malaysia
- ★ Mongolia
- ★ Myanmar
- Pakistan
- ★ Philippines
- ★ Singapore
- Sri Lanka
- ★ Thailand
- ★ Viet Nam
- (Pacific)**
- Australia
- Cook Islands
- Kiribati
- Marshall Islands
- Micronesia
- New Zealand
- Palau
- Papua New Guinea
- Tonga

(North America)

- ★ Canada
- ★ United States of America

(Latin America and the Caribbean)

- ★ Argentina
- Brazil
- Jamaica
- Mexico

(Europe)

- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- Estonia
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- ★ Ireland
- Italy
- Kazakhstan
- Kyrgyz Republic
- Latvia
- ★ Poland
- Romania
- ★ Russia
- Slovak Republic
- Slovenia
- Spain

- ★ Switzerland
- Turkmenistan
- ★ United Kingdom

(Middle East)

- ★ Bahrain
- Iran
- Jordan
- ★ Kuwait
- ★ Oman
- ★ Qatar
- ★ Saudi Arabia
- ★ Turkey
- ★ United Arab Emirates

(Africa)

- Algeria
- Benin
- Botswana
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cape Verde
- Chad
- Comoros
- ★ Côte d'Ivoire
- ★ Djibouti
- Egypt
- ★ Ethiopia

- Gabon
- Gambia
- Ghana
- Guinea
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Libya
- Malawi
- Mali
- Mauritius
- ★ Mozambique
- Namibia
- Rwanda
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Sudan
- Swaziland
- Tanzania
- Togo
- Tunisia
- Uganda
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The Road to Revival

Onagawa's Happiness Recovery Festival and Iwate's Sanriku Railway

Onagawa: When the Great East Japan Earthquake struck on March 11, 2011, the ensuing tsunami almost completely wiped out the coastal town of Onagawa in Miyagi Prefecture. Three years after the quake, in March 2014, the town held a festival called “*Fukkō-sai*” (復興祭). *Fukkō* (復興), which means “reconstruction,” is commonly used to refer to the postquake rebuilding effort. The name of the festival uses the same pronunciation but a different second character, 幸, which means “happiness.” So it was called the “Happiness Recovery Festival.”

The day before the festival, Onagawa held a race starting at 3:32 p.m., the time that the tsunami struck in 2011, on a course from where the town center formerly stood to a safe spot on high ground. The first three runners to reach the goal won the title *Fukkō-otoko*, or “Happiness Recovery Man.”

It may seem bizarre to commemorate a tsunami with a racing event, but in Japan many observances of past troubles employ festivals or even divinities. By staging annual festivals in remembrance of these events, people pass on the memories from generation to generation.

As Onagawa's mayor, Yoshiaki Suda, explains, “We want to make this not just a simple event but a tradition. Festivals have long been occasions for prayer and remembrance. I wanted to make this something that would transmit the lessons of the tsunami to future generations.”

Iwate: The Sanriku Railway runs along the Pacific coast of Iwate Prefecture, weaving through the terrain of the heavily indented coastline. Its route links the seaside communities of Iwate that were devastated by the March 2011 quake and tsunami. Though the 107.6-kilometer course was designed to be safe from tsunamis, 5.8 km of track was washed away, along with three of the railway's 16 cars. In addition, the earthquake caused heavy damage on other portions of the route, causing bridges to collapse, tracks to subside, and tunnel walls to crack.

Five days after the disaster, however, the employees of the Sanriku Railway, conscious of its role as a symbol of normal life in the area, managed to resume partial operations. And in the communities where the trains were still not running, residents took it upon themselves to clean up and weed the areas around the local stations. Iwate Prefecture used some relief funds it had received from Kuwait on something that would last and bought three railway cars to replace the ones that were lost. The cars are marked with the Kuwaiti national emblem and carry the inscription “We greatly appreciate the support from the State of Kuwait” in Arabic, English, and Japanese.

The entire line will reopen for service on April 6, 2014 and Sanriku Railway President Masahiko Mochizuki declared with a smile, “A new car bought with Kuwait's support will be the first one to run on the fully reopened railway.”



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1. Participants in the March 2014 pre-festival race in Onagawa run at full speed uphill from the area hit by the tsunami. Their goal was the *Inochi no Hi* (Life Monument) that has been raised on the higher ground of the town's junior high school. 2. The race was open to men and women of all nationalities; the only requirement was that they be able to deliver the message "When a tsunami is coming, flee to

high ground." The top three runners received certificates designating them as *Fukkō-otoko*, meaning "Happiness Recovery Man." 3. To mark the start of the festival, the top runner rings the *Kibō no Kane*, or Bell of Hope, which had been in front of the town's train station before the tsunami and was found in the rubble after the disaster.



نقدّر كثيراً دعم دولة الكويت

We greatly appreciate the support from the State of Kuwait.

クウェート国からのご支援に感謝します。

	5	7
4	6	

4&6. The new Sanriku Railway cars bought with relief funds from Kuwait carry the country's national emblem on their front and back. The cars also carry inscriptions in Arabic, English, and Japanese expressing gratitude for Kuwait's support. 5. Visiting Kuwait in August 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe meets with Crown Prince Sheik Nawaf and presents a poster inscribed with messages of gratitude from the employees of the Sanriku Railway and residents of communities along its route. 7. Masahiko Mochizuki, the president of Sanriku Railway, points at a picture of one of the new cars, expressing appreciation and saying that the railway will make good use of them.

Tackling the Contaminated Water Problem

The Current Situation at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station

Three years have passed since the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake. Speaking before the International Olympic Committee on September 7, 2013, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe referred to the aftermath of this accident, declaring: “Some may have concerns about Fukushima. Let me assure you that the situation is under control. It has not done and never will do any damage to Tokyo.”

From November 25 to December 4, 2013, an expert team from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) conducted a review of Japan’s plans for decommissioning the power station. Upon completing the review, Juan Carlos Lentijo, the team leader and IAEA Director of the Division of Nuclear Fuel Cycle and Waste Technology, stated, “Japan has established a good foundation to improve its strategy and to allocate the necessary resources to conduct the safe decommissioning of Fukushima Daiichi.” And at a press conference at the Foreign Press Center, Japan (FPCJ) on December 4, he noted, “What we have seen is that the contamination is contained in the main buildings of the plant and inside the port associated to the site. But there are still some risks of leakage to the environment, and for this reason, they have adopted a set of countermeasures to prevent and correct this potential risk.”

With regard to dealing with the contaminated water from the station, the policy of the Japanese government is based on three principles: 1) removing the source of the contamination, 2) isolating water from the contamination source, and 3) preventing leakage of the contaminated water. In line with this policy, work is in progress on immediate countermeasures, such as the removal of highly contaminated water from the trenches and the pumping out of groundwater, and on fundamental countermeasures, including installation of impermeable walls to prevent leakage of water into the sea and leakage of groundwater into the buildings. Decisions have also been reached on additional preventive and multilayered measures, such as accelerated installation of welded-joint tanks, further measures to restrain the inflow of groundwater, and installation of the Multi-nuclide Removal System (known as ALPS).

How much contaminated water leakage is there? According to a report compiled by the Committee on Countermeasures for Contaminated Water Treatment in December 2013, analysis indicates that groundwater is flowing into the land under the buildings at Fukushima Daiichi (Units 1–4 and processing buildings) at a rate of approximately 800 cubic meters per day, of which approximately 400 cubic meters enters the buildings. Since the groundwater that has entered the buildings is pumped out as required, it does not flow out to the sea but is stored and processed in tanks for contaminated water. The committee’s analysis indicates that the remaining 400 cubic meters of groundwater is not entering the buildings but is flowing out to sea. This water is flowing to the sea through land that was contaminated from leakage at the time of the accident, and so it is believed that some of what is flowing into the sea is contaminated.

At present, the contaminated water is of many types, including highly contaminated water in the buildings and trenches, contaminated water that has been pumped out and is being stored in tanks pending completion of its processing, and tritium water (containing a radioactive isotope of hydrogen) that has been put through the ALPS. The key point is speedy processing of the contaminated water; this is now being implemented using ALPS equipment, which has a processing capacity of 750 cubic meters a day.

This article is written based on information as of February 21, 2014

Preventive and Multilayered Measures and Monitoring of the Environmental Impacts

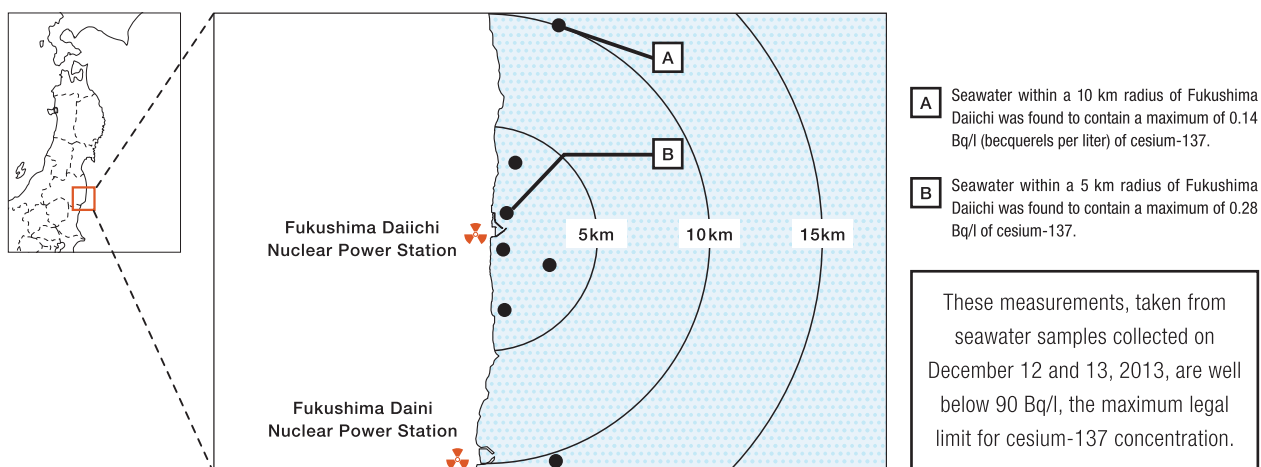
The government is not leaving handling of the situation up to Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO), which owns Fukushima Daiichi; it has moved to the forefront and is taking steps, including the formulation of basic policy and an action plan for decommissioning and contaminated water countermeasures, fiscal provisions for technologically difficult measures, and considering, formulating, and following up on “preventive and multilayered” measures. The IAEA’s expert team offered a positive assessment of these steps.

Meanwhile, the government has been monitoring radiation levels in seawater and elsewhere in the environment constantly for more than two years under the Comprehensive Radiation Monitoring Plan. As of the end of July 2013, there were no longer major fluctuations in the monitoring results, but the government is also enhancing its seawater monitoring in line with the points raised by the IAEA.

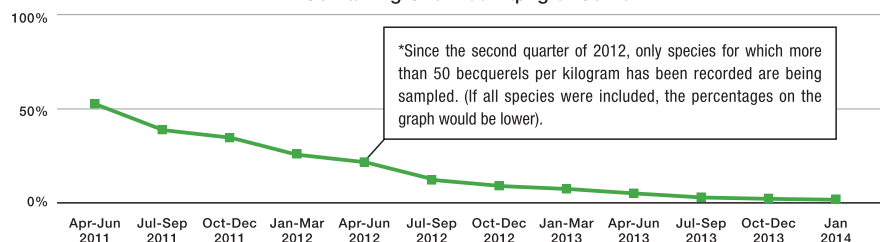
In addition, the Fisheries Agency continues to conduct sampling tests of marine products about once a week at Fukushima Prefecture’s major ports. The share of sampled products with radiation exceeding safety standards, which was 53% as of April–June 2011, has fallen substantially, to 1.9% as of October–December 2013.

The Japanese government publishes new information on the nuclear power facilities and contaminated water as it becomes available from its ministries and agencies on the websites described below.

Samplings of Radioactive Isotope Cesium-137 in Seawater Around Fukushima Nuclear Power Stations



Percentage of Fukushima Seafood Samples Containing Over 100 Bq/kg of Cs-137



Click for More Information About Contaminated Water Leakage

Prime Minister of Japan
and His Cabinet

[http://japan.kantei.go.jp/
ongoingtopics/waterissues.html](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/ongoingtopics/waterissues.html)

Ministry of Economy,
Trade and Industry

[http://www.meti.go.jp/
english/earthquake/nuclear/
decommissioning/index.html#cw](http://www.meti.go.jp/english/earthquake/nuclear/decommissioning/index.html#cw)

Nuclear Regulation
Authority

<http://www.nsr.go.jp/english/>

Fisheries Agency

[http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/
e/index.html](http://www.jfa.maff.go.jp/e/index.html)

International Atomic
Energy Agency Report

[http://www.meti.go.jp/english/
press/2014/0213_02.html](http://www.meti.go.jp/english/press/2014/0213_02.html)

Japan's Proactive Contribution to Peace

Japan Adopts Its First National Security Strategy

With a cabinet decision on December 17, 2013, the government set forth two key documents: Japan's first National Security Strategy, to set the basic course for diplomatic and defense policy, and a new version of the National Defense Program Guidelines. The security environment surrounding Japan is becoming ever more severe. In addition to weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, Japan faces increasing new threats like cyberattacks, and it has become difficult for a single country to defend its peace and security on its own. Japan cannot protect its day-to-day peace and security unless it actively contributes to regional and global stability and security in cooperation with the international community. On the basis of this view, the government has adopted the concept of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" as the basic principle for Japan's national security strategy.

As a country surrounded by the sea on all sides, Japan must undertake to maintain and develop an open, stable maritime order. And as an economic power, a country with great economic strength and high technological capability, it intends to contribute to the development of the world economy while securing its own economic growth and prosperity through expansion of the open, rule-based international economic system. Japan will address global issues in cooperation with the United States and other partners in the Asia-Pacific region and elsewhere that share the universal values of freedom, democracy, respect for basic human rights, and the rule of law.

Japan will also strengthen the domestic foundation required for the implementation of these policies. Needless to say, it will not change its ongoing adherence to the policies that are a testament to the path it has taken as a peace-loving nation: maintaining an exclusively defense-oriented posture, not becoming a military power, and observing the Three Non-Nuclear Principles.

National Defense Program Guidelines and Medium Term Defense Program: Construction of a Dynamic Joint Defense Force

Under the new National Defense Program Guidelines (NDPG), which were revised to strengthen the country's defense capability, Japan will boost its deterrence and response capabilities by developing defense capabilities adequate both in quantity and quality to underpin various activities in addition to conducting tailored activities swiftly and sustainably based on joint operations by the Ground, Maritime, and Air Self-Defense Forces. For this purpose, Japan will build a Dynamic Joint Defense Force, placing emphasis on developing advanced technological and command, control, communication and intelligence capabilities and achieving readiness, sustainability, resiliency, and connectivity in terms of both tangible and intangible resources while giving consideration to the establishment of broad infrastructure for logistic support. The Medium Term Defense Program, which gives concrete shape to the NDPG, provides for an increase in defense spending, which had been virtually declining, and for steps including the introduction of unmanned aerial vehicles and tilt-rotor aircraft.

As China's increasingly expanding maritime activities and North Korea's nuclear and missile program development show, the security environment surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe. In view of this situation, Japan will act firmly to protect

the lives and property of its people and the integrity of its territorial land, waters, and airspace with the recently adopted NDPG and Medium Term Defense Program.

Launch of the National Security Council

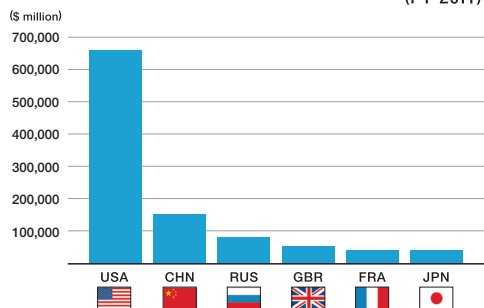
On December 4, 2013, Japan established a National Security Council (NSC) to serve as the command center for the country's diplomatic and security policies.

In consideration of the increasingly serious security environment that Japan faces, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe created the post of “minister in charge of strengthening national security” when he took office in December 2012. And in February 2013 the government established the Advisory Council on the Establishment of a National Security Council. These moves were a part of urgent efforts by the Abe administration to establish a Japanese NSC.

With the launching of the NSC, Japan has finally joined the ranks of the many countries that have an NSC or similar high-level body. On December 17, 2013, the Japanese NSC approved the National Security Strategy; henceforth, the government will conduct unified management of information relating to diplomacy and national security and make important policy decisions promptly under the leadership of the prime minister. In January 2014, the National Security Secretariat was set up within the Cabinet Secretariat to plan and draft proposals for diplomatic and defense policies and serve as the secretariat for the NSC. Shotaro Yachi, a former vice-minister for foreign affairs, was named as the first Secretary General of the Secretariat and National Security Advisor to the Cabinet.

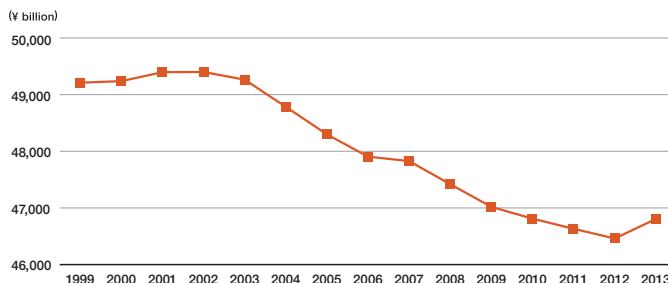
The core of the NSC is the “Four-Minister Meeting,” which consists of the prime minister, chief cabinet secretary, foreign minister, and defense minister. This group will convene expeditiously and hold regular meetings to formulate the basic orientation for national security, including medium- to long-term national security strategy. In the event of

Defense Spending by Major Countries
(FY 2011)



This graph shows that the defense expenditures of major countries in Purchasing Power Parity terms. In FY2011, China's defense spending was approx. 3.2 times as large as Japan's; in FY2014 China announced its defense budget increased by 12.2%, and has grown approx. 40-fold over the past 26 years. Source: Defense of Japan 2013 and other government documents.

Japan's Defense-Related Spending



In FY2013, defense-related expenditures, which had been declining continuously since FY2003, were increased in real terms for the first time in 11 years, in order to reinforce preparedness aimed at protecting the lives and property of the populace and the integrity of its territorial land, waters, sea, and airspace, in light of the increasingly harsh security environment. Source: Defense of Japan 2013

emergency situations involving the lives and property of Japanese people, the NSC will hold a Ministerial Emergency Meeting to discuss measures required for a prompt and appropriate response; such meetings will include additional ministers of state responsible for relevant matters. And when serious matters of national defense are at stake, civilian control will be ensured by the convening of a Nine-Minister Meeting, which will include the minister for internal affairs and communications, minister of land, infrastructure, transport, and tourism, and other ministers, to decide which actions to take.

The National Security Secretariat has started with a complement of 67 staff members, including the chief, two deputies, and three councilors. It has been organized into six sections to handle planning, policy drafting, and overall coordination concerning particular regions and various national security policy topics.

The NSC will overcome the sectionalism among ministries and agencies to conduct policy making in a strategic and flexible manner. In order to accomplish this, it will be essential for the NSC to gather and analyze information. It is legally stipulated that ministries and agencies are required to supply information to the NSC for this purpose.

A Secrecy-Protection Framework Equivalent to Those of Western Countries

In order to make appropriate decisions on the information that has been gathered, it is extremely important in particular to exchange information with other countries, and for this purpose it is essential to build mutual trust with relevant foreign government institutions by establishing a system for the protection of secrets concerning national security. This is the purpose of the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets that was passed in the Diet on December 6, 2013, which provides for the protection of secret information concerning national security in fields like defense and foreign affairs.

In many Western countries, laws on the protection of state secrets have long been in effect, while freedom of information acts are relatively recent. In Japan, in contrast, an information disclosure law (Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs) has been in effect for some time, while up to now, the only legal provision on protection of national security secrets not related to defense has been the general duty of confidentiality imposed on civil servants under the National Public Service Act, with no general legislation for the protection of information concerning national security. Therefore, Japan has often been ridiculed as a paradise for spies. For this reason, some people said that it was not possible to obtain sufficient confidential information required for national security from Japan's allies. The new law creates a framework to ensure the prevention of unauthorized disclosure of such information. Thus Japan has finally established a setup of the protection of secrets comparable to those of Western countries.

It is also hoped that the enactment of this legislation will enable the government of Japan to respond swiftly to international terrorism and changes in Japan's national security environment. If an incident involving international terrorism, such as the hostage crisis in Algeria in January 2013, occurs, this act will enable Japan to exchange highly secret information with other countries involved; Japan should be able to cooperate with other countries more than before in responding to the turbulent global situation.

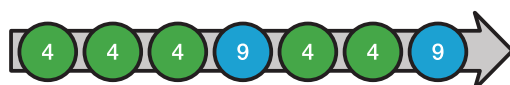
Outline of the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets

Under the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets, cabinet ministers and other heads of administrative organs shall designate information under their jurisdiction as specially designated secrets, but only if it meets the strict conditions defined by the law. Information to be designated as a specially designated secret must be in one of four fields, namely, defense, diplomacy, prevention of specified harmful activities, and prevention of terrorist activities, and within each of these fields the eligible items are set forth specifically in the appended table of the act. In this respect, this act is more

Organization of the National Security Council (Japanese NSC)

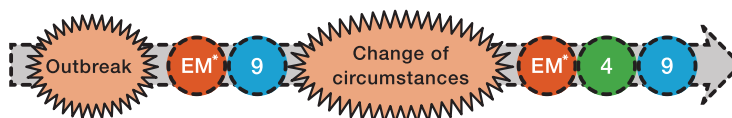
Four-Minister Meeting	Nine-Minister Meeting	Ministerial Emergency Meeting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister - Chief Cabinet Secretary - Foreign Minister - Defense Minister 	<p>When needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister - Deputy Prime Minister - Chief Cabinet Secretary - Foreign Minister - Defense Minister - 5 other relevant ministers 	<p>At times of emergency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prime Minister - Chief Cabinet Secretary - Other Ministers to be designated

Meetings Under Ordinary Circumstances



4-Minister Meetings are held on a regular basis and in a flexible manner, and are carried over to 9-Minister Meetings as necessary.

Meetings Under Situations Requiring Response



Operations necessary in responding to situations are handled by the Crisis Management office.

*EM: Ministerial Emergency Meeting

National Security Secretariat

- Secretary General
- Two Deputy Secretary Generals
- Three Cabinet Counselors

Special advisor to the prime minister on national security

-Fixed post to be filled by a politician

*In charge of directly advising the prime minister and coordinating with the Diet

Administration

(19 staff)



Running of four-minister meeting, and administrative duties

Strategy

(8 staff)



Medium-to-long-term policy, including National Security Strategy (NSS) and National Defense Program Guidelines

Intelligence

(11 staff)



Communication with intelligence divisions at government ministries and agencies

Policy Group 1

(8 staff)



United States, Europe, Australia, India, ASEAN

Policy Group 2

(8 staff)



Northeast Asia, Russia

Policy Group 3

(7 staff)



Middle East, Africa, Central and South America

detailed than the corresponding act in other countries. The effective period of each specially designated secret is up to 5 years; it can be extended for up to a maximum of 30 years. In order to extend the effective period for more than 30 years, Cabinet approval is required. Even in such cases, the effective period cannot be extended beyond 60 years unless the information comes under one of the seven items, such as encryption or human intelligence sources. Handling of specially designated secrets will be limited to those who have passed the security clearance. Civil servants and others officially charged with handling specially designated secrets who commit the unauthorized disclosure of such secrets are subject to a maximum of 10 years' imprisonment.

In the course of deliberations on this act in the Diet before it was passed, concerns were raised that the act would interfere with news-gathering activities by extending the scope of what is considered secret information and that information could be classified arbitrarily. However, this will not happen. For one thing, the information to be labeled as specially designated secrets will comprise only a small fraction of what has been considered secret up to now; the scope of secret information will not be expanded, and the information disclosure law will still apply. Also, the act explicitly calls for due consideration of freedom of the press and news gathering that contributes to guaranteeing the right of citizens to know, and it recognizes the validity of legitimate news-gathering activities.

Furthermore, compared to ordinary government secrets, which are not determined by a clearly defined set of procedures under any law, specially designated secrets are limited to those so defined in provisions of the new law, which also includes details regarding the effective period of designation and procedures to extend it. This represents a major advance in transparency.

The law is to be implemented according to the standards based on opinions given by non governmental experts, in the Council for the Protection of Information as described below and an annual report on the law's implementation, including opinions from these experts, will be submitted to the Diet and made publicly available; moreover, an independent and impartial organ will be established to verify and examine appropriateness of designation, etc. With this framework, improper designation of secrets will be prevented.




Initiatives to Prepare for Enforcement of the Law

The Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets is expected to come into effect within this year. The government is making thorough preparations in advance so that the new act can be implemented appropriately and effectively and to allay public concern and enhance public confidence in the act.

One of the initiatives that the government has taken in this connection is the establishment of the Council for the Protection of Information. Prime Minister Abe attended the inaugural session of this council on January 17, 2014. The prime minister will hear the opinions of members of the council as it considers the details of the matters subject to designation and the standards for setting effective periods of designation and for conducting the security clearance process.

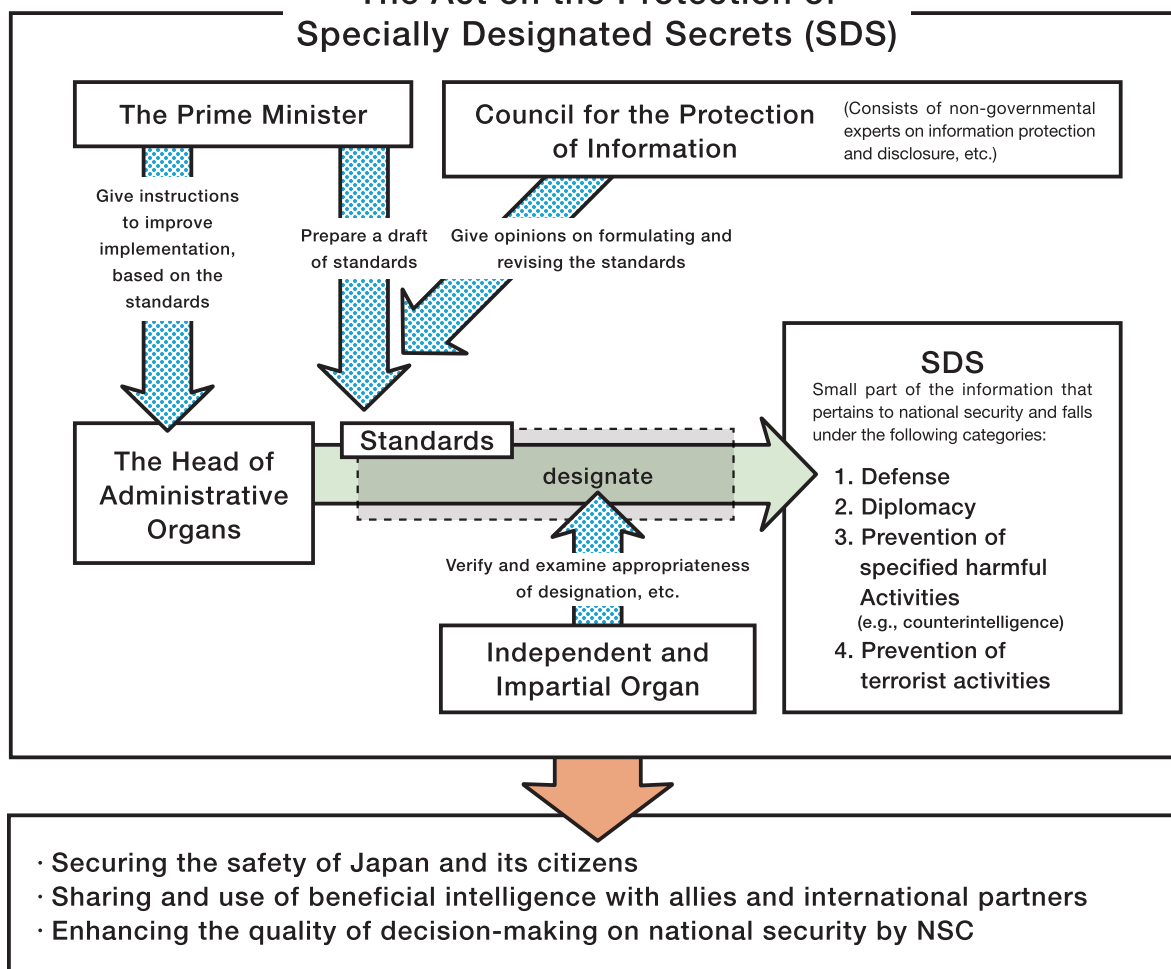
Next on the Abe administration's agenda is consideration of the right to collective self-defense. With this move, along with the establishment of the NSC to provide leadership in national security and diplomacy and the enactment of the Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets to facilitate the exchange of important secret information with allies, the administration aims to create a normal national security framework that will allow Japan to engage in mutual assistance with its allies and to make international contributions as a responsible, independent state.

Comparison with Other Countries

Countries	Legal basis	Categories	Secrecy period
 United Kingdom	Security Policy Framework	Defense, international relations, information that might lead to the commission of a crime, etc.	Not defined
 United States	Executive Order	Military plans, foreign relations of United States, intelligence activities, etc.	Generally up to 10 years (renewable ^{*1})
 Japan	The Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets	Defense, diplomacy, prevention of specified harmful activities (e.g., counterintelligence), prevention of terrorist activities	Up to 5 years (renewable ^{*2})

*1 not longer than 25 years in principle
*2 not longer than 30 years in total without the cabinet approval in principle

The Act on the Protection of Specially Designated Secrets (SDS)



International Contributions of Japan Self-Defense Forces

Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) have been making diverse international contributions such as through the United Nations PKOs (Peacekeeping Operations) and international disaster relief activities. We are introducing here some of the activities of the SDF through photographs.

Dispatch of SDF Personnel to South Sudan (Peacekeeping Operations)



1. Constructing a simple footbridge for an elementary school in Juba. 2. Constructing a main road between Juba and Yei. 3. Preparing playground for an orphanage. 4. Water provision activities for IDPs. 5. Medical support at the SDF temporary aid station.

At the time of the independence of South Sudan, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) was established by UN Security Council Resolution No. 1996 in 2011, with the aim of fostering state building. After receiving requests from the UN, Japan has dispatched around 400 personnel to South Sudan. Up to now, the SDF has been engaging in engineering activities in the capital, Juba, and its surrounding areas while coordinating with international organizations, troops from other countries, NGOs, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Since the deterioration of the security situation in December 2013, the SDF is currently conducting activities to support Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) at the UN facilities located in Juba, South Sudan. The engineering unit has been engaging in various activities for locals including the construction of IDP camps and water supply.

International Emergency Relief Activities in the Philippines in the Wake of the Super Typhoon Damage



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1. Members and crew of the *Ise* see off the medical assistance unit. 2. Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC) lands in Tacloban City, Leyte Island to carry out epidemic prevention activities. 3. The SDF unit carrying out epidemic prevention activities in Tacloban City, Leyte Island. 4. The medical assistance unit conducting medical assistances in the affected area. 5. Volunteers unloading supplies at Guiuan Airport and members of the SDF verifying the state of progress. 6. The local people invited the SDF members to an event to express their gratitude. While praying for the area's recovery, the SDF delivered Christmas presents to the local children. 7. Troops presenting local children with origami helmets (paper craft for folding into various shapes).

In November 2013, at the request of the government of the Philippines, which had suffered large-scale damage from typhoon Haiyan, the Philippines International Disaster Relief Team was organized and dispatched to the stricken areas. Thereafter, the operation was expanded, and a total of about 1,180 personnel including medical assistance and air support unit, maritime dispatched group, and airlift unit, engaged in the disaster relief activities including medical assistance, epidemic prevention and transport of relief supplies.

Antipiracy Operations Off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden



1. 15th contingent naval vessels *Akebono* and *Hamagiri*.
 2. The destroyer *Setogiri* in the midst of its escort duties and the ship being escorted. 3. 16th contingent *Ariake* DD-109 and *Setogiri* DD-156, and 17th contingent *Samidare* DD-106 and *Sazanami* DD-113. 4. Crew of the *Ariake* on duty approaching a comrade ship for water supply. 5. The *Akebono* escorting a civilian ship. 6. Carrying out local exchanges with the people of the Republic of Djibouti.

The Ministry of Defense (MOD)/SDF dispatched two destroyers and two P-3C patrol aircraft to escort civilian vessels and to conduct surveillance operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden to counter piracy. The deployed Maritime Force and Air Force for Antipiracy Operations have been carrying out operations cooperatively with other countries and have respectively been participating in a multinational task force, the Combined Task Force 151 (CTF 151), since December 2013 and February 2014.

Participation in Pacific Partnership 2013 (Tonga and Papua New Guinea)



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5		

1. Visiting a local elementary school, where a dental medical officer is conducting a dental examination. 2. Troops explaining first aid methods to local doctors. 3. Troops giving local residents guidance in brushing their teeth. 4. Introducing Japanese culture to local elementary school pupils through origami. 5. Introducing Japanese culture to local elementary school pupils through kendo (a Japanese martial art).

The Pacific Partnership is the name given to activities hosted by U.S. forces started in 2007. The activities are aimed at strengthening mutual collaboration among participating nations and promoting smooth implementation of international disaster relief activities, while visiting countries in the Asia-Pacific region by ship, and providing medical care and exchanging cultures with local residents in cooperation with governments, militaries, international organizations, and civilian organizations such as NGOs. The MOD has been deploying medical personnel from the Maritime Self-Defense Force annually since 2007, and they have been participating in medical activities and engaging in cultural exchange with local residents.

Friends of Japan

In this report we introduce the life and work of three friends of Japan.

剣道

K e n d o



Alexander Bennett

Professor Alexander Bennett at Kansai University Kendo Dojo,
where he teaches Japanese students the Way of kendo.

Kendo: Developing One's Spiritual Armor

Professor Alex Bennett first came to Japan from New Zealand as a high-school student in 1987 on the Japan Rotary Exchange Program. He encountered kendo, a Japanese martial art, during that time, and it changed his life forever. After completing his Ph.D. at Kyoto University, he spent four years at the International Research Center for Japanese Studies (Nichibunken) and is now an associate professor at Kansai University.

Professor Bennett relates, "When I first encountered kendo, the helmet and bamboo sword reminded me of *Star Wars* and I thought of my teacher as being akin to Darth Vader. That was appealing to me as a teenager; but at the beginning kendo was very tough. It was certainly a baptism by fire. The training was highly rigorous, tough both mentally and physically. You are pushed to your mental limits, but this is an important part of the growth process. And it is only then that you reach a part of yourself you didn't know existed."

Kendo is a way of life that is written with the character *dō*. The word *dō* means a way or path (*michi*) upon which one bases one's life; the same character is used in *chadō* (the Way of Tea). Professor Bennett continues, "I discovered a great spiritual strength in myself through kendo; I ceased to fear things, and various problems no longer bothered me the way they once had. I was able to learn the importance of letting go of my ego and became confident and, at the same time, humble. This is something one has to experience through long and consistent training. It is an ongoing process."

According to Professor Bennett, one of the great things about kendo and other Japanese martial arts is that they are not merely competitive sports. In kendo, it is more about developing spiritual than physical armor. Kendo is based on the notion of a double-edged sword (*tsurugi*), one side that is directed at the opponent, and the other at oneself. One aims to defeat oneself as much as one's opponent in a never-ending process of self-perfection. One of the main concepts of kendo is *zanshin*, which literally means "lingering heart," and it refers to the importance of developing a spirit of constant vigilance and respect.

The ultimate aim of this martial art form is to incorporate its elements into one's everyday way of living. By this means, one is always looking deep inside oneself, both one's thoughts and actions. One is always filled with feelings of gratitude to opponents because growth is impossible in kendo without them. Because of this, one never shows excessive joy in victory; one is always humble and thankful to the opponents. In addition, unlike Western sports, there is no retirement from kendo. As one ages physically, kendo becomes more spiritual. Instead of relying on physical strength, one focuses on the psychological openings in the other caused by fear, doubt, and hesitation, while seeking to purge one's own weaknesses. Kendo becomes a real barometer for one's level of maturity and psychological strength.

Professor Bennett concludes, "Proud of my identity as a New Zealander, I have a deep love and respect for the Japanese martial arts, which transformed my life and gave me a path to search things very deeply. I am not religious in a conventional sense, but I suppose I could say kendo fills this role, as it is a way of life for me. Over the years, I have become a bona fide Kiwi-Japanese, and hold an intense feeling of gratitude to generations of people who created the martial arts and their lessons and teachings that still survive in the culture of kendo. So for me, I think it is quite natural to visit the graves of the great warriors of the past. In the classical school of kendo that I belong to, which is called the Kashima Shinden Jikishin Kage-ryu, the founder and heads of the school from centuries ago are enshrined in the Kashima region, and I often visit there to express my gratitude for their teachings and wisdom. It is important to the Japanese to visit the graves of ancestors to express their respect to all the deceased, no matter who they are. Contemplating their ways and deeds helps to illuminate the present."



古民家

K o m i n k a



Alex Kerr

Mr. Alex Kerr, a leading figure in the architectural restoration of Japanese historical houses, at his home in Kameoka, Kyoto.

Restoring Japan's Cultural Heritage

Mr. Alex Kerr is celebrating his fiftieth year in Japan. He arrived in 1964 just in time for the first Tokyo Olympics. He attended an international school in Yokohama for two years and fell in love with Japan. After studying at Yale and Oxford, he studied antique collecting with David Kidd and managed the Program for Traditional Arts at Omoto in Kameoka, Kyoto, from 1977 to 1997. In the 1980s he became interested in the preservation of Japan's cultural heritage and wrote several books on it. Mr. Kerr is currently one of the leading figures in the field of cultural preservation in Japan.

In the summer of 1971, Mr. Kerr discovered the hidden Iya Valley in Tokushima Prefecture, Shikoku. Discovering the beauty of the old thatched houses (*kominka*) that he discovered there was an experience that changed his life. In 1973 he purchased a 300-year-old house that he named Chiiori (Cottage of the Flute), and over time the restoration of old Japanese houses came to be one of his main activities. In 2004 Mr. Kerr began restoring old Kyoto townhouses (*machiya*). There are now 150 such restored houses in Kyoto, and many Japanese people enjoy staying at these traditional homes.

With the increased promotion of tourism in Japan, there is rising demand for the restoration of Japan's cultural heritage. Mr. Kerr is currently directing many restoration projects, including Iya Valley, Totsukawa (a remote village in Nara Prefecture), Ojika (an island off the coast of Nagasaki Prefecture), and Hida-Takayama (a historic town in Gifu Prefecture). He finally restored his own beloved house, Chiiori, two years ago.

Regarding his interest in Japanese culture, Mr. Kerr said, "I developed a great love of the Japanese performing arts, such as Kabuki and Japanese dance (*nihon buyo*) and attended countless performances. But for me two of the great joys of Japanese culture are the architecture and calligraphy. I had been learning Japanese calligraphy as a child, so when I first came to Japan it was such a thrill to discover Chinese characters everywhere. Calligraphy became a great passion of mine that I have kept up to this day. I even set up a mounting studio in Thailand and trained the mounters in Japanese techniques.

Mr. Kerr continued, "My other great joy is Japanese architecture. Japan was at the end of the Silk Road and incorporates elements from many countries in its architecture, including those of Southeast Asia, China, and Korea. The Japanese assimilated these elements and developed their own distinctive architectural style. In Japan there is a great love of raw materials in their natural state. In architecture, you see this in the use of plain white paper, clay and bamboo, unpainted wood, rough-hewn stone, and so forth. In the Japanese traditional home, the raw materials are left intact so that one encounters paper, wood, and tatami that are unadorned. One is always stimulated to think about the materials themselves, and this also applies to the contemporary work of such architects as Tadao Ando, who are clearly steeped in this tradition. Another feature of Japanese architecture is that the rooms tend to be largely empty, with little or no furniture placed in the interior spaces. You could call Japanese interiors a culture of the empty space."

"Developing from 'empty space,' Japanese architectural aesthetics created "variable space" or *ma*, the triumph of Japanese architecture. The walls are made of sliding doors that can be opened or shut to create and re-create marvelous fully open spaces or closed-off spaces, depending on the occasion. Rooms can be made larger or smaller; windows slide not only left and right, but up and down. At each shift of a door or window, vistas appear or disappear. I believe that one of the reasons for the great success of architects such as Tadao Ando and Kuma Kengo comes from their instinctive understanding of *ma*, an approach to the use of space that was developed by the Japanese and that deeply impacted their sense of beauty."

He concluded, "Japan is a country full of treasures from the past, and their preservation is essential as they are an extremely important part of our human heritage."



茶 道

C h a d ō



Randy Channell Soei

Mr. Randy Channell Soei in his café, ran Hotei; he teaches the Way of tea to both Japanese and non-Japanese.

The Heart of Japanese Hospitality

Mr. Randy Channell Soei first left his native Canada to study kung-fu in Hong Kong. Wanting to further develop his skill in martial arts, he moved to Japan, where he practiced training in Japanese *budō* (martial arts) for a decade in Matsumoto in Nagano Prefecture. He then moved to Kyoto to study *chadō*, the traditional Japanese Way of tea (widely known as the tea ceremony) at the Urasenke Gakuen Professional College of Chado from 1993 to 1996. Upon graduating he began teaching and is currently a tea master who lectures all over Japan to both Japanese and non-Japanese on the Way of tea, in addition to his regular lessons at Nashinoki Shrine. He received his “tea name,” Soei, in 1999.

Living in Hong Kong, Mr. Channell first became aware of the phrase *bunbu ryodō*, which means that a warrior should be accomplished in the cultural arts as well as being a person of refinement and education. So to balance his martial training, he sought out other cultural arts. By coincidence, his next-door neighbor was a teacher of the Way of tea, and when he had his first tea experience, Mr. Channell was immediately enthralled. “The movement and postures of tea are actually very similar to *budō*,” he said.

According to Mr. Channell, “The four principles of *chadō* are *wa, kei, sei, and jaku*; harmony, respect, purity, and tranquility. They were valid 500 years ago, they are valid today, and they will be valid 500 years from now. The ideals of the Way of tea are timeless. Another important phrase is *ichigo ichie*. Simply translated it means a once-in-a-lifetime encounter. No tea gathering can ever be captured and repeated in exactly the same way. All the guests share a special bond because of their participation in that singular event. *Chadō* allows you to enter a new world based on the aesthetics developed by Sen no Rikyu and other great tea masters. The Way of tea is at the very heart of Japanese *omotenashi* (hospitality) culture. It is a complete art form, including many other traditional Japanese arts, such as architecture, calligraphy, flower arrangement, ceramics, and lacquerware.

“The Way of tea is a developing tradition. By adapting and looking to the future, it has been able to continue, where as other arts have become stagnant,” remarked Mr. Channell. “In 1872 at the World Expo held in Kyoto, Gengensai, the 11th Grand Tea Master of the Urasenke traditon, served tea using the *ryurei* style, one that incorporates tables and chairs. He developed this style so that the visiting dignitaries could enjoy tea without having to sit for hours on their knees, as was the vogue in the Meiji period for tea practitioners. Similarly Sen Genshitsu, the 15th Grand Tea Master of Urasenke, adopted the Way of tea to be a vehicle for spreading world peace. He has traveled around the world for more than 50 years, serving tea everywhere with the message, Peacefulness through a Bowl of Tea.”

Mr. Channell commented, “The Way of tea can be mastered by a person of any nationality. Japanese culture is for all people and one of Japan’s greatest exports. The reputation of the Japanese is that they are group oriented, and they are; but they are just like anyone else when you get to know them as individuals.”

As Mr. Channell noted “The tea ceremony is very deep, but does not have to be difficult. Tea is a time for sharing. We do not bow to objects in tea; we bow to the scroll, not as an object but out of respect for the words and the person who wrote it. So you can be of any religion and still enjoy the Way of tea. All it requires is an open mind and heart. As with some forms of Japanese martial arts that cannot be performed without another person, in the Way of tea the guests play an important and integral role. It is very interactive. The Way of tea can also be very simple and enjoyable, too, the ideal atmosphere to experience the heart of Japanese *omotenashi*.”



Additional Information

Topics and Places



The Way of Tea (Chadō)

One of the most respected cultural arts of Japan, the Way of tea is a tradition that has been passed down for centuries. Though referred to as the “tea ceremony” devotees prefer to call to it the ‘Way of tea’ or by the Japanese terms *chadō* or *chanoyu*. The Way of tea involves many aspects of Japanese culture including calligraphy, pottery, food, and flowers, but the most important part is making tea and serving it to the guest.

An anecdote from the life of Sen no Rikyu, the most influential historical figure in *chadō*, shows the essence of *chadō*. Rikyu was asked by a student to elaborate on the Way of tea. Rikyu replied “Make the tea well, lay the charcoal so that boils the water, in summer suggest coolness, in winter warmth; arrange the flowers as they are in the fields; be early for the appointed time; prepare for rain regardless; and be considerate of the other guests.” Perhaps hoping for some underlying secret from Rikyu; the student was disappointed with the answer and replied “I can do that!” to which Rikyu replied “If you truly can, then I will become your student!”



Dō

The word *Dō* means “Way” in Japanese, so kendo means the Way of the sword, *chadō*, the Way of tea, and *shodō*, the Way of calligraphy. There are many “Ways” in Japanese culture, and traditionally they require a life-long commitment to self-improvement through dedication to the Way. *Dō* is one of the most important concepts in Japanese traditional culture.



Hanging scrolls Kakejiku

The hanging scroll, or *kakejiku*, is an integral part of any tea gathering. Written by people of virtue, they often set or bring together the theme of the gathering. At an informal gathering, the scroll is often hung with a flower display.



Kendo

It is a modern Japanese martial art, which descended from swordsmanship (*kenjutsu*). It employs bamboo swords (*shinai*) and protective armor (*bōgu*), and it is widely practiced both within Japan and overseas. The goals of kendo are to develop a strong spirit, cultivate the self, and promote peace and harmony among nations.



Kominka

The word *kominka* is used for old wooden structures of the type that people lived and worked in (not temples or shrines), including farmhouses, shops, and even barns and storehouses. The tiled and thatch-roofed *kominka* that you see as you travel around the country make up one of the richest stocks of old wooden buildings in the world.



Ojika

The islands of Ojika off the coast of Nagasaki Prefecture have an ancient history. In the eighth century, emissaries from Kyoto stopped at the harbor on their way to China. In the early 1600s Christians escaping persecution came here and lived in secrecy as "Hidden Christians" until the 1870s. With beaches, fishing and kayaking, and the little Gothic church of the Hidden Christians high on a cliff on an abandoned island, Ojika has great charm. Alex Kerr restored seven *kominka* (old houses) for visitors to stay in and a restaurant.



Hida Takayama

Hida Takayama in Gifu Prefecture is surrounded by rich nature, with the Northern Alps in the background; it has a long history dating back to the Jomon period. It has developed its own distinct culture with influences from the widely differing Edo and Kyoto cultures. There are many hot springs to enjoy, and it is also one of the best places left in Japan to see lovely old houses (*kominka*). In the old town (*Sanmachi*) wooden buildings from the Edo period are still used as houses and shops. The village of Shirakawa, a World Heritage Site, is located near Takayama and makes for an excellent daytrip from Hida Takayama.



Iya Valley

The Iya Valley region in Tokushima Prefecture is known for its beautiful scenery and dramatic mountain valleys. Access to the area has improved in recent years, but because Iya Valley and the inner parts of Shikoku consist of mountains and steep canyons, the natural beauty of the area has remained intact. In Japanese history, Iya Valley was a favorite retreat for refugees and defeated warriors, especially members of the Taira clan who went to the area after losing the Genpei War. In modern times, Iya Valley has become an increasingly popular tourist destination.



Chiiori

Chiiori was purchased by Mr. Kerr in 1973. It is an old thatched farmhouse in the hamlet of Tsurui, in East Iya, Tokushima Prefecture. At Chiiori Trust, the non-profit organization dedicated to the house, the "Chiiori dream" is taking shape: to find a place in the countryside that retains its original beauty and there to build an eco-friendly community deeply rooted in Japan's traditional culture. The many aims and activities at Chiiori include the preservation of old houses and projects to revitalize the village. Visitors can enjoy the Iya experience for daytrip visits or overnight stays.



Iya Hotei

Iya Hotei is a traditional Kyoto *machiya* (townhouse) that is over 100 years old. It was painstakingly renovated by Mr. Channell to combine elements of the romantic Taisho period of Japan (1912-1926) with art deco from the West. The concept of this Japanese café, which opened in 2007, was to introduce the Way of tea in a simple yet relaxed fashion to people living in or visiting Kyoto. Anyone can come by and enjoy the atmosphere with their favorite drink or even have a "tea experience" with Mr. Channell. Since its opening, he has served tea to thousands of guests.

What Surprises Foreigners About Japan

Some things about Japan that seem ordinary to Japanese
are surprising to foreigners.

Whenever we ask foreigners what image they have of Japan, we receive many replies that “The country is clean; the people are polite, and it is a safe place.” So we decided to ask foreigners who have actually visited, “What sort of things surprised you in Japan?”

The graphic on the right shows the replies received from 50 foreigners in Japan who were asked, “In the event that you have lost an important item* in Japan, has it been returned?” An impressive 68 percent of the respondents answered, “Yes!” And more than half of those people expressed surprise that their “wallet was returned.” Many of them were surprised at the safety and security of this country, which is a delightful result indicative of the excellent public peace and order found in Japan. Another indication of the high level of public safety is that there are many vending machines on the streets, which are not vandalized and always ready to be used.

Many respondents also seem to have been pleasantly surprised by the fine train service. This may seem only a matter of course to the Japanese, but foreigners highly rate the fact that the trains run exactly on schedule although there are so many of them in operation. Moreover, in connection with high-quality service, foreigners have expressed surprise that taxi doors open and close automatically and at the Japanese attention to small details, such water sprays affixed to toilets for cleansing. A serious nature combined with the spirit of *omotenashi* (hospitality) has made such high-quality service the norm.

Many foreigners have also expressed surprise at how well the city streets are maintained. Even when no one is looking, people do not discard trash on the streets. Furthermore, when occasionally encountering long lines on a sidewalk or at train stations, Japanese stand properly in rows even without guards or security staff present. The way the Japanese people helped one another amid all the confusion following the disasters of the great earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011, even became a topic of discussion in other countries. Japanese behavior is typified by observing rules and is based on a spirit of mutual aid: an exemplary consciousness of avoiding acts that would cause trouble to others and of coming to the rescue when others are in distress.

Security, service, and public order, which foreigners have expressed surprise about, all seem to be based on this sort of spirit, which is treasured by the Japanese people. However, these things are so natural to the Japanese that many of them go unnoticed until they are pointed out by foreigners.

(*“Important items” refers here to various types of personal bags, personal computers, smart-phones, wallets, etc.)

Did You Ever Lose Something Valuable in Japan? Was It Returned?

I forgot a large bottle of expensive sake on a bus once. I thought it was lost for sure. I reported it to the transport company anyway. The office staff asked me to wait and made a phone call. To my surprise, the bus driver drove up in his own car (he was off duty) and delivered the bottle of sake. I was shocked. [Canada/38/male]



I forgot my laptop on the train once and got it back the next day. [Germany/29/female]



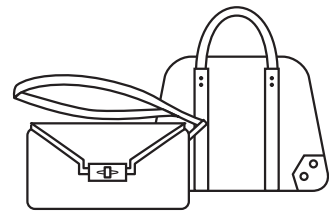
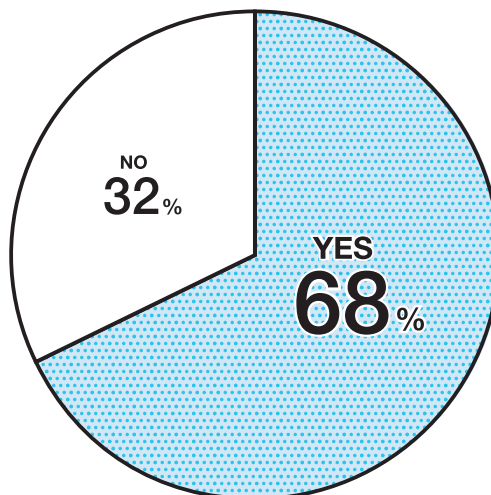
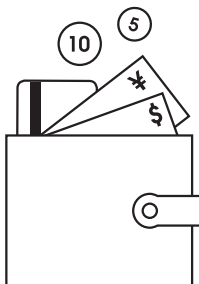
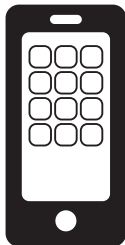
I once left my bag in a store and the owner came running after me to return it! [USA/66/male]



I once left my wallet at a store in Kyoto, and a woman came running with it. I think that only happens in Japan. [Argentina/14/female]



I've lost my cell phone and my backpack, and both times I was able to recover the items. The backpack was left on a train, and the station staff immediately contacted other staff on the train to retrieve the bag (after I explained exactly what train car it was on). As for my cell phone, someone gave it to the nearby police station, where I later picked it up. [USA/44/male]



We surveyed 50 randomly selected foreign nationals. Of the 34 who responded that they had lost an important item in Japan but had it returned to them, 12 had been reunited with a lost wallet.

The Senkaku Islands:

3 Commonly Held Misconceptions

Many of the recent media stories about the Senkaku Islands seem to be based on mistaken notions. Here we examine some of the most commonly held misconceptions.

Misconception 1: “Japan ‘seized’ the Senkakus from China.”

Stories about the Senkaku Islands often state casually that Japan “seized them” from China as a result of the Sino-Japanese War. Is this true? Japanese fishermen and merchants had already grown active in and around the Senkakus for some years by 1893 when some of them drifted ashore in China (then under the rule of the Qing Dynasty) and were questioned by the authorities there. Despite such an increase in activities by Japanese citizens on the Senkaku Islands, there is no record whatsoever of China having asserted sovereignty over these islands during that time, including in the aforementioned case. Against this backdrop, Japan incorporated the Senkakus into Okinawa Prefecture with a Cabinet decision in January 1895. In no sense did Japan “seize” them, much less “steal” the islands from China. In this light, it is only natural that these islands did not come up for discussion in the April 1895 peace treaty negotiations at the end of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95. In the first place, a report on Japan submitted to the Qing government by one of its experts in 1889, titled *You li Riben tu jing* (Maps, Figures and Depiction of Japan based on field research), explicitly listed the Senkakus as Japanese territory. The preface to the report was written by none other than Premier Li Hongzhang, a powerful statesman who soon after represented China in the April 1895 peace talks. It is thus simply inconceivable that the Qing government considered the Senkakus to have been “seized” from it.

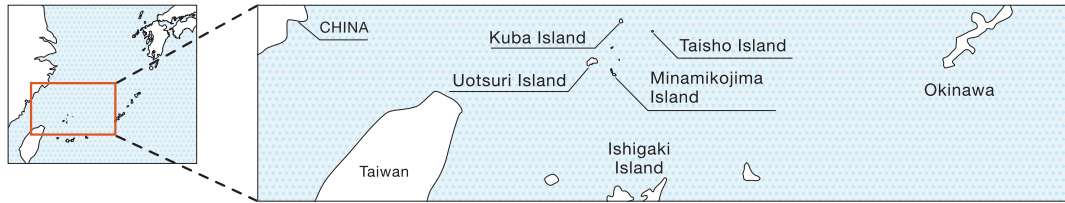
Misconception 2: “Japan is overturning the post-World War II order.”

Stories about the Senkakus sometimes contain the assertion that Japan is seeking to overturn the post-World War II international order. This is also mistaken. One only needs to examine the way Japan’s territory was determined under the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which is the very basis for the “postwar order” in East Asia. Under this treaty, Japan relinquished part of its prewar territories including Taiwan and the Korean Peninsula. The areas that Japan did not relinquish were thus determined to be Japanese territory under this treaty. The Senkakus were in the latter category. The treaty also provided that Okinawa, a portion of Japan’s remaining territory under this treaty, was to be administered by the United States, and the scope of Okinawa, given in geographical coordinates of longitude and latitude, explicitly included the Senkakus. It is therefore only natural that, when the United States returned Okinawa to Japanese administration in 1972, the Senkakus were included in the reversion. Likewise, it is not surprising that two of the islands in the Senkakus continue to be designated as firing/bombing ranges for the U.S. forces in Japan by the United States and the Japanese governments.

It was in 1971 that China started to challenge this “postwar order” with assertions of sovereignty over the Senkakus, after the possible existence of oil deposits in the area was pointed out. Japan, meanwhile, has observed the United Nations Charter and supported the “postwar order” as a peace-loving nation that has not fired even a single shot against another nation during the entire postwar period and as a democracy that embodies universal values like the rule of law and respect for human rights.

It is often asserted that the Senkakus were “returned” to China under the Cairo Declaration of 1943, but this is another error. Needless to say, by definition, mere political documents like the Cairo Declaration cannot determine countries’ territory. This can be done only by means of legal instruments on the basis of international agreements, such as the San Francisco Peace Treaty. To begin

The Senkaku Islands at a Glance



(Photo: ©Ministry of Defense)



Kuba Island



Uotsuri Island

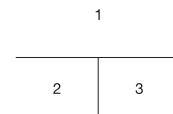


Minamikojima Island



Taisho Island

Life and Industry on the Senkaku Islands at a Glance



1. Drying bonito on Uotsuri Island.
(Photo: Hanako Koga/©Asahi Shimbun)

2. Residents of Uotsuri Island on the island during the Meiji era (1868-1912).
(Photo: Hanako Koga/©Asahi Shimbun)

3. Dried bonito factory and residents' homes on Uotsuri Island. A trade vessel lies just offshore, and the Japanese flag flies over the island.
(Photo: Hanako Koga/©Asahi Shimbun)



The
Senkaku Islands

Seeking Maritime Peace Based on the
Rule of Law, not Force or Coercion
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aC9gyVeCAp0>

with, the Cairo Declaration naturally contains no language whatsoever indicating that the Senkakus, which were not “seized” from China in the first place, have to be somehow “returned.” If the islands had been “returned” under this declaration, why did no country assert sovereignty over them from 1945 to 1971? The absence of such claims clearly demonstrates that the Senkakus are Japanese territory and that the “postwar order” recognized them as such.

Misconception 3: “Japan unilaterally heightened tensions by changing the status quo.”

In 2012 the government of Japan acquired ownership of part of the Senkakus that had been privately owned, including Uotsuri Island, the largest of the islands. It has sometimes been asserted that, in doing so, Japan unilaterally changed the status quo regarding ownership of the Senkakus, thereby heightening tensions. This, too, is erroneous.

First, title to portions of the Senkakus has changed hands in the past, both between the government and private owners and from one private owner to another. The islands that the government acquired in 2012 were ones that the government had previously owned. The fact is that whether the land is owned by the government or a private party in no way changes the fact that the Senkakus are Japanese territory under Japan’s valid control.

Second, it is China that unilaterally heightened tensions over the Senkakus prior to 2012. For example, in 1992, China suddenly listed the Senkakus as its own territory under its territorial sea law; beginning in 2008, it repeatedly sent official vessels to the area around the Senkakus and made incursions into Japan’s territorial waters. This behavior contradicts China’s claim that possession of the Senkakus was “shelved” by agreement between Japan and China in the 1970s. Of course, there was in fact no such agreement. China is continuing to heighten tensions in the area with attempts like these to change the status quo by force or coercion. In 2013, China took dangerous actions that escalated the situation in the area and that could have serious consequences, such as locking fire-control radar on a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force vessel and suddenly declaring an Air Defense Identification Zone (ADIZ) over the East China Sea and unilaterally imposing mandatory rules on this airspace. In the face of such actions, Japan has consistently refrained from heightening tensions and responded in a way that aims to protect the international order based on the rule of law. At the same time, Japan continues to call for dialogue with China, which is its biggest trading partner, a long-time friend, and the counterpart in one of its most important bilateral relationships.

The Senkakus have a history of people full of vitality and good will.

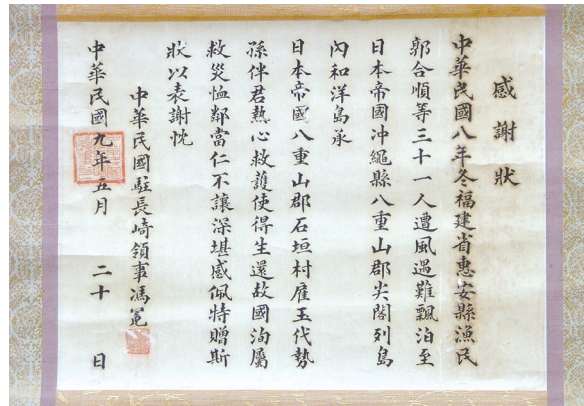
In recent years, many people around the world have become familiar with the name “Senkaku Islands.” But what is still not widely known is the fact that these islands have an interesting history as the home of Japanese people full of vitality and kindness. After the islands were incorporated into Okinawa Prefecture in 1895, they became inhabited with a population that at its peak topped 200 residents, and a variety of economic activities were conducted there with the government’s approval. The principal industry was processing bonito caught in the islands’ waters, turning it into *katsuo-bushi*, the dried bonito used in making *dashi* fish stock. This *dashi* is the key to the delicious taste of many Japanese foods, and the *katsuo-bushi* from the Senkakus was good enough to win a silver medal in a nationwide competition in Japan. Also, small stuffed birds from the islands were used to decorate ladies’ hats in the Western world of the day. And albatross feathers from the island were valued as a material for down quilts in Western countries.

In 1920, after a group of Chinese fishers washed ashore and were rescued in the Senkakus, the consul of the Republic of China in Nagasaki Prefecture sent letters of appreciation to each of the Senkaku residents and other Japanese in Okinawa who were involved in the rescue; the letters explicitly indicate the Senkakus Islands as being part of Okinawa. The Japanese residents of the Senkakus thus played a part in building friendship between Japan and China.

Eventually the day will come when the Senkaku Islands are known to the people of the world for their true charm.

The Senkaku Islands at a Glance

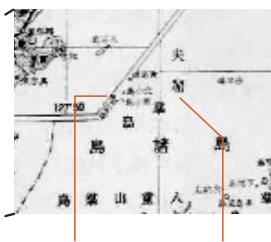
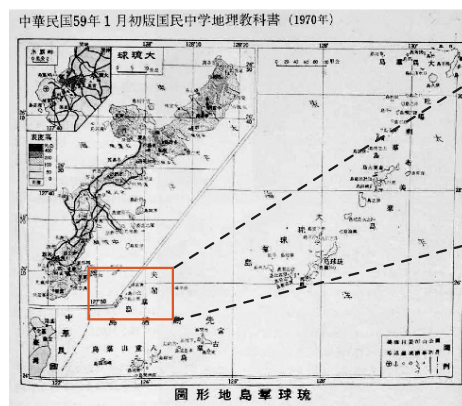
Life and Industry on the Senkaku Islands at a Glance



Chinese consul's 1920 letter of appreciation for the rescue of 31 fishermen washed ashore in the "Senkaku Islands, Yaeyama District, Okinawa Prefecture, Empire of Japan."

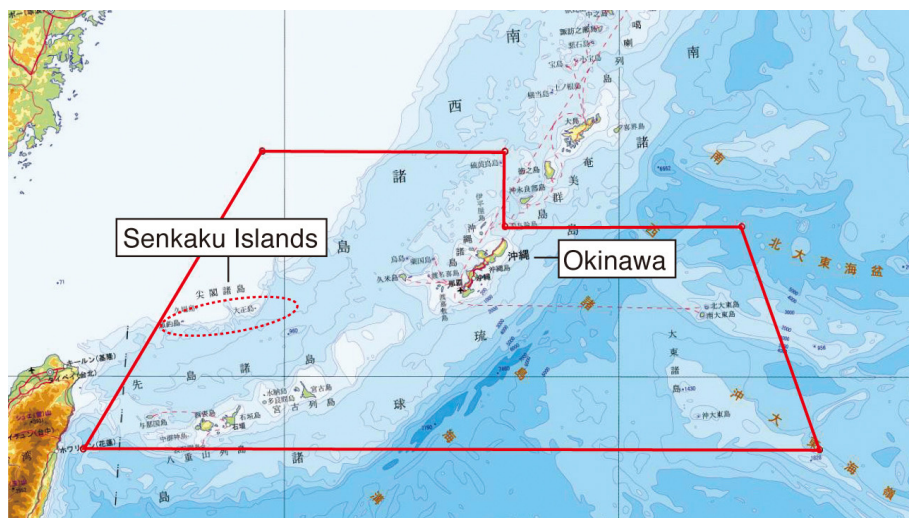
(Photo: Yaeyama Museum)

The "Post-WW2 Order" at a Glance



Uotsuri Island Senkaku Islands

This map from a 1970 Chinese textbook shows the Japan-China boundary passing between Taiwan and the Senkakus and identifies the latter with their Japanese name.



The administrative rights of all of the islands within the area inside the straight lines on the map were returned to Japan in 1972 in accordance with the Okinawa Reversion Agreement. The Senkaku Islands are included in this area.

When a Loved One Disappears

Missing: Japanese Abducted by North Korea

Imagine that, many years ago, a daughter was born to your family. As the newborn baby gave her first cry, you pledged to bring her up to be a fine person. She grew before your eyes, thriving on your love and attention. She pulled herself upright and took her first steps. She called you “Mama” and “Papa.”

You took delight in recording her growth and happy family times with your camera. She went to elementary school and then started middle school. You took a picture of her, now a big girl, in her school uniform and another of her in a bright red kimono, adding these to the treasured memories in your photographic record.

But then tragedy struck. One evening, she didn’t come home from school. She had disappeared without a trace. Day after day, you searched for her. Where could she have gone, and why? Did she think that you had been too strict with her? Had she been in an accident? However you looked, wherever you turned, there was no sign of your precious daughter. The days turned into weeks, weeks into months . . . For almost twenty years, your life was consumed by this endless search.

One day, at long last, news of your daughter arrived. You learned that she was among the Japanese abducted by North Korea. Eventually the North Korean government admitted the abduction. It said she had died. But the official records it provided appeared to include forgeries and altered documents, and DNA testing revealed that the remains it returned were those of someone else. She’s still alive, you thought. She must be! Another decade has passed, but you have never lost hope of being reunited with her.

This is a true story, the story of Megumi Yokota, born in 1964 and abducted in 1977. And sadly, it is far from the only such story. The Japanese government has identified seventeen cases, including Megumi’s, of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea. The families of the remaining abductees and numerous other missing people who may have been abducted are continuing their campaign to bring their loved ones home. The Japanese government is firmly determined to secure the return of all these people and is still working to accomplish this.

Japanese nationals are not the only victims. Other known cases of possible abduction by North Korea involve people from Thailand, Romania, and Lebanon, and there have been reports of abductions from China and other countries as well. North Korea’s abductions are an issue not just for Japan but also for the world.

Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea

<http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/index.html>



Animation Film

Megumi

<http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/shisei/keihatsu/anime.html>

“*Megumi*” is a 25-minute animated documentary portraying the struggles of first-year middle school student Megumi Yokota’s family and their efforts to rescue her after North Korean agents abducted her in 1977 while she was on her way home from school.



Megumi Yokota poses in front of her home amid a backdrop of snow. The picture, taken by her father, Shigeru, to commemorate his daughter entering middle school, depicts the beginning of a bright future for the young woman. Megumi was abducted in 1977.

Saving Mothers' Lives

Japanese Assistance Improving Cambodian Healthcare

In 2006 a pregnant woman died in a small village in Kampong Cham Province, about 120 kilometers northeast of the Cambodian capital of Phnom Penh. The cause of death was severe blood loss. She had been unable to receive treatment even though her fetus had died in the womb.

The woman knew that something had gone wrong, but she could not consult a doctor. "I can't spend money on transportation to a hospital when my husband earns a pittance," she reasoned. Moreover, Cambodia had no system to get emergency patients to key hospitals. By the time she was brought to the National Maternal and Child Health Center (NMCHC), the woman had already stopped breathing.

Just eight years ago, fatalities like this were very common in rural Cambodia. *Chlong tonle*—that is how the Cambodians refer to childbirth. The expression, which means "crossing the river," compares giving birth to crossing a large river at the risk of losing one's footing in a deep spot or rapids and thus losing one's life. In Cambodia, childbirth was a matter of life and death.

Swift Japanese Assistance for Birthing Facilities

Civil war ended in Cambodia in 1991. Many healthcare professionals had died, and facilities were in disrepair, so women had no choice but to deliver their babies at home. Making birthing facilities available and training midwives and other medical professionals formed an important pillar of the country's reconstruction at the time.

Japan was quick to extend assistance. In 1992 it dispatched a medical advisor to Cambodia's Ministry of Health, and in 1995 it launched a project for developing human resources for better maternal and child health. In 1997, Japan built the NMCHC in Phnom Penh with grant aid. A project enhancing midwife-training capacity in the provinces has also been under way since 2007.

Pediatrician Yuriko Egami, who currently works at the NMCHC as chief advisor, says, "The Cambodian Ministry of Health has finished assigning midwives to all of the country's roughly one thousand health centers, and now it's working on increasing the number of midwives to two per center."

These efforts reduced maternal mortality rates from 900 per 100,000 births in 1990 to 437 in 2000 and still more to 206 in 2010. The target of reducing maternal deaths to 250 per 100,000 births by 2015, part of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, was achieved five years ahead of time.

"What is great about Japanese assistance," Egami continues, "is that it develops the entire package, including the institution and the systems to make it work." Japan's international cooperation does not just build facilities; it also develops the human resources to operate them, with the aim of ultimately handing over all operations to the people of that country. Japan follows through with this spirit in many of its international contributions.

Locals in Cambodia affectionately refer to the NMCHC as the Japan Hospital. The friendly nickname will endure even after the hospital no longer has Japanese staff.

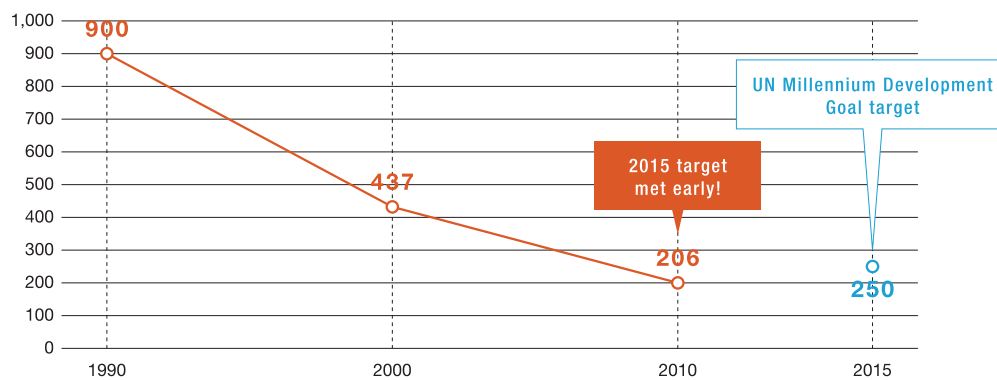


1.National Maternal and Child Health Center (NMCHC) chief advisor Yuriko Egami escorting Prime Minister Abe around the center. 2.Prime Minister Abe visiting the NMCHC and smiling at an infant. 3.Training at the NMCHC. 4.A proud mother watches over her safely delivered child.

1	2
3	4

Cambodia's Maternal Mortality Rate

(mortality rate per 100,000 live births)



The graph shows how the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of reducing maternal deaths to 250 per 100,000 births was achieved five years ahead of time.

Japan's Global-Leading Medical Services

High-Quality Medical Care with Japanese Hospitality

People from around the world choose to receive medical care in Japan for three reasons. First, healthcare facilities in Japan offer high-quality, skilled treatment by specialized teams. Second, Japan focuses on developing advanced, minimally invasive treatments that are easier on patients than conventional alternatives. Third, Japan's healthcare facilities provide meticulous, individually customized care and services, reflecting the Japanese spirit of *omotenashi*, or warm, thoughtful hospitality.

The range of medical services offered is wide, from advanced medicine, such as cancer treatment and heart surgery, to cosmetic surgery and physical checkups. Being able to undergo treatment with peace of mind is becoming the biggest attraction of Japanese medical services for foreigners.

Quality of Care

In the case of surgery to remove stomach cancer, for example, a surgeon performs the operation, and specialists from the departments of internal medicine (chemotherapy) and radiology (radiotherapy) take part as needed. Other doctors may participate as well—to offer psychiatric care if the patient is mentally unstable, or palliative care if there is great pain. This kind of team-based medical care is a well-established tradition in Japan. Other medical specialists, such as nurses, pharmacists, and physical therapists, also form part of the team. These individuals are highly skilled and have a wealth of specialized knowledge. Of particular note is their high sense of mission. And the solidarity of these teams is reflected in the treatment results.

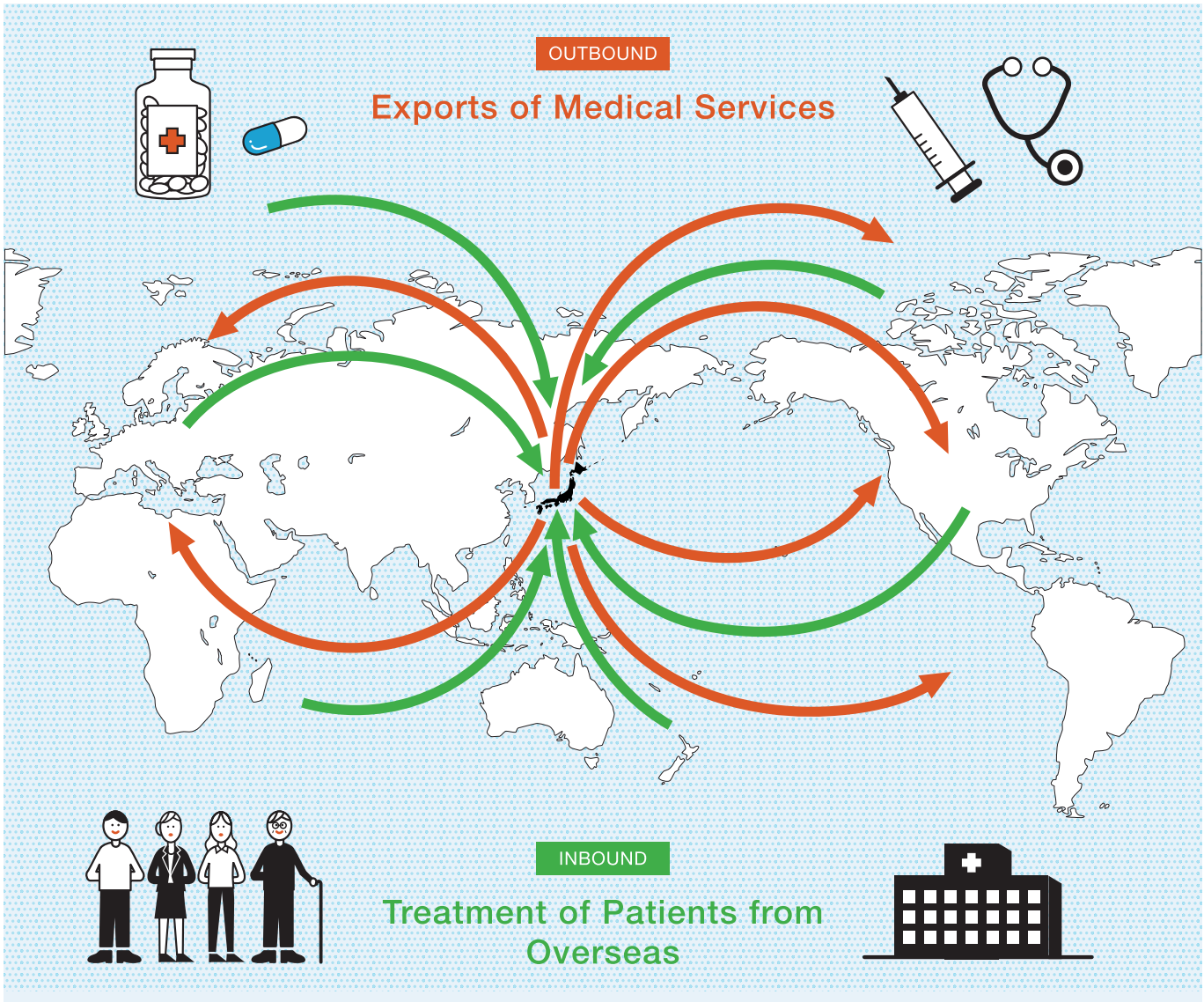
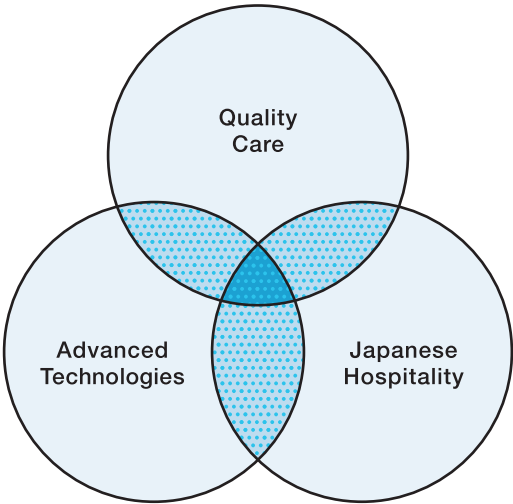
Minimally Invasive Treatment Through Advanced Technologies

Japan is at the forefront of medical technology in the fields of diagnosis and surgery by endoscopy. Endoscopic surgery is easier on the patient's body than open surgery, and the practical application of advanced endoscopes that give magnified and highly defined images has made it possible to determine in real time whether a tumor is benign or malignant. Another type of treatment for which Japan is renowned is transradial intervention (TRI), in which clogged heart vessels are treated with a catheter inserted through the wrist. This requires a smaller incision than when inserting the tube through the leg, so the bleeding stops sooner and patients can walk immediately after the procedure. Japan also leads the world in both development and practical use of particle beam therapy, allowing cancer to be treated without surgery.

Japanese Hospitality

The Japanese spirit of *omotenashi* (hospitality), of attending to the needs of individual guests, is expressed in the provision of customized medical care. Japan manufactures safe composite materials for bone repair tailored to the individual physique. Furthermore, technology for implanting artificial joints is also becoming established and put to clinical use. In the treatment of cleft lips and palates, methods are employed that account for differences in build, vocalization, and healing.

Three Major Japanese Medical Strengths



Japanese Technologies Supporting Global Medicine

Diagnosis and Treatment with Minimal Discomfort

One aspect of Japan's medical services gaining global attention is the provision of minimally invasive treatment, in which patients are effectively diagnosed and treated with a minimum of stress. This is made possible by medical equipment that is easy on the patient's body. Prime examples include endoscopes, for which Japan holds a 70 percent share worldwide, diagnostic imaging equipment that enables high-definition, high-speed imaging, and the world's thinnest injection needles, which minimize patients' pain.

Endoscope

For ages, doctors have wanted to be able to look inside the living body. In 1950 Japan's Olympus created a gastroscope made of a pliable rubber tube with a camera lens at the end. This device, the precursor of today's endoscopes, made the inside of the body visible and revolutionized the medical world. Creating it involved an extended process of trial and error, from making a minuscule lens and providing a powerful light source to selecting the tube material, optimizing the film, and waterproofing the device, but after much hard work the gastroscope was completed. The tireless improvements and refinements that followed have yielded magnifying endoscopes that can zoom in on the membrane surface and image-enhanced endoscopes that generate clear images of pathological tissue. Today, Japan is the clear leader in the endoscopy market, with a share of 70 percent.

Diagnostic Imaging Apparatus

Japan's particular forte is computed tomography. The world's first multislice CT scanner (320 rows), which Toshiba Medical Systems introduced in 1999, opened the way for high-definition, high-speed imaging of the body. It eased the burden on patients by enabling quick detection of cancer and other diseases and almost halving the radiation exposure from that of conventional CT scanners. The multislice CT scanner is particularly effective in diagnosing heart conditions. In the case of aortic aneurysms, doctors can easily learn the size of the aneurysm and its risk of rupture. It is also perfect for following up on such procedures as angioplasty (expanding blood vessels with the use of balloons or stents) and bypass surgery.

World's Thinnest Injection Needle

The world's thinnest insulin needle, with a diameter of only 0.18 mm, is also made in Japan. The ultrathin tip minimizes the pain of insertion, and the tapered shape allows the drug to flow smoothly through the narrow needle. This needle is a great boon to diabetics, who must inject insulin every day. The needle is made by rolling a sheet of metal into a tube, a process made possible only by the die-and-mold and press technologies honed at Tokyo's small neighborhood factories. The product is the fruit of Japan's excellence in manufacturing.

Advanced Medical Equipment in Japan

Japan leads the endoscope market with a 70% share

The endoscope minimizes patient discomfort. Today, Japan is the clear leader in the endoscope market.



Advanced video endoscopy system



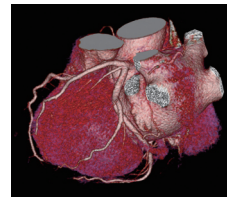
Ultrasound videoscope, used for examining submucosal tumors, esophageal varices, and bile duct stones

High-definition CT scanner

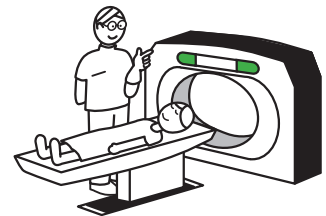
The multislice CT scanner provides clean 3D images of the heart, and is especially effective in diagnosing heart conditions.



320-row area-detector CT



3D image of heart taken with this CT system



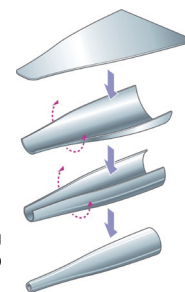
World's thinnest insulin needle



The world's thinnest injection needle, with a diameter of 0.18 mm, from Terumo



Thin needles minimize pain and discomfort for patients who have to take insulin injections every day.



Produced by rolling a sheet of metal into a tapered tube

Useful Information for Traveling in Japan

Shopping in Japan Becomes Even More Attractive for Foreign Visitors

The pleasures of traveling in Japan include tasting traditional Japanese food and enjoying beautiful scenery that changes from season to season, but surely shopping is another important one. Popular items with foreign visitors range from Japanese digital cameras, watches, and rice cookers to cosmetics, luxury goods, Japanese sweets, and sake. These can be purchased at department stores, the electronics stores of Akihabara, regional outlet malls, and in shops all over Japan.

Tax-free stores offer convenient shopping for foreign visitors. Repeat visitors already know that the Japanese tax exemption system is very convenient, as procedures are completed at the point of purchase. This means that, unlike in many other countries, visitors do not need to pay the consumption tax when making a purchase and then line up at the airport before the flight home to receive a refund. This convenient Japanese system is greatly admired by those in the know.

Here's some more exciting shopping information to keep in mind: Beginning in October 2014, an even bigger variety of tax-free goods will be available for purchase. The range of tax-free items has been limited to home appliances, cameras, and clothing, but beginning in October 2014 visitors will enjoy tax-free shopping for products that are the pride of Japan, such as cosmetics, foods, medicine, and alcoholic beverages. This is a dramatic improvement for shoppers! Goods that are hard to find at airport stores, such as famous local sake, sweets, and other unique products, can be purchased tax-free. How exciting shopping will be!

Look for tax-free stores with the Japan Tax-free Shop cherry blossom logo. We look forward to serving you!

In preparation for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, we are making every effort to make travel in Japan even easier and more enjoyable, so that visitors will want to come back again and again. Please come and visit Japan! Japan is waiting to welcome you!



This is the Logo!

As of January 2014, a new symbol designating tax-free shops at a glance will be used throughout Japan. A list of the tax-free shops will be provided on the Japan National Tourism Organization's website beginning in April 2014.

Enjoy Shopping!

A Wider Range of Tax-Free Products

Up to September 2014



Bags



Home appliances



Clothing



Cameras

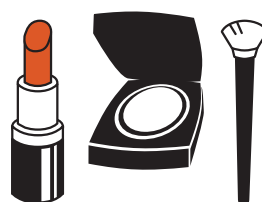
From October 2014



Groceries



Beverages

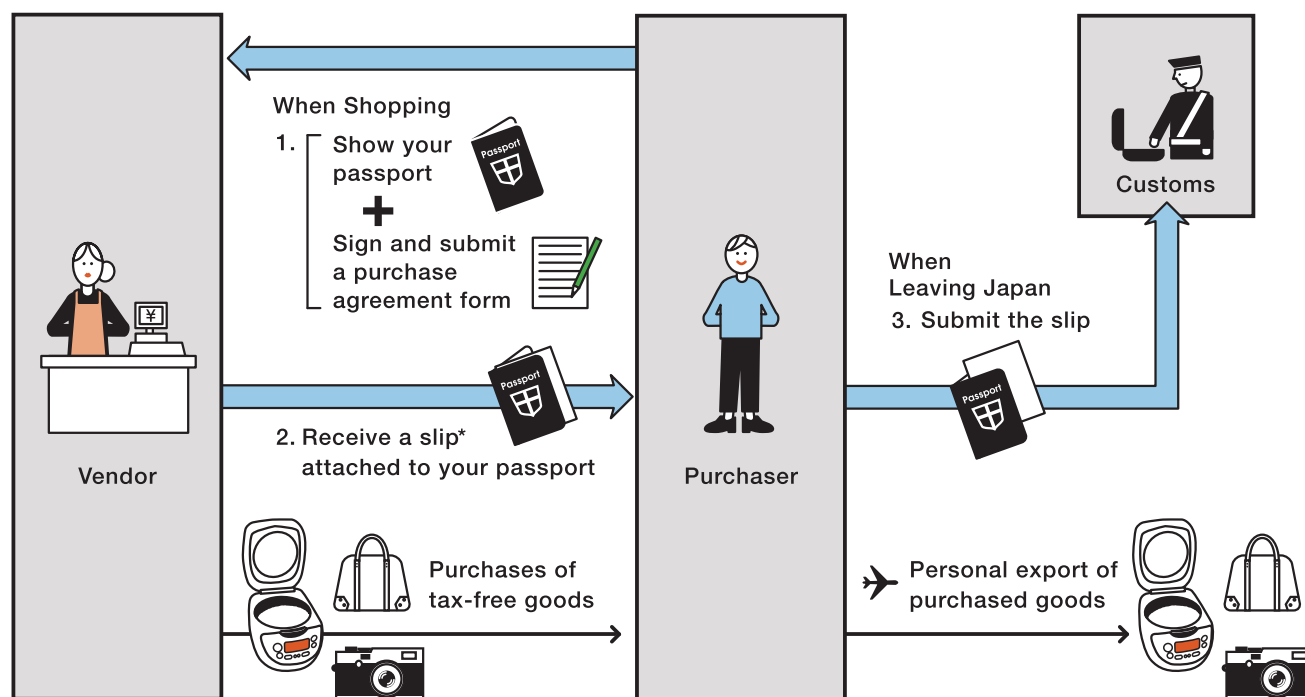


Cosmetics



Medical goods

Procedures for Tax-Free Shopping



*Slip: Record of Purchase of Consumption Tax-Exempt for Export

This article is based on the website of National Tax Agency

From the Moment of Disembarkation to Arrival in Central Tokyo—How Fast It Has Become!

These Days, the Airports of Japan Are First in Convenience

There was a time when a person getting off an airplane after a long journey would feel depressed just thinking about the destination still ahead. However, anyone familiar with how convenient access from Japanese airports has become in recent years will have no need for such worries. Let us explain, using Tokyo as an example.

Let's say that your airplane has landed at Tokyo Narita Airport, the main entrance to Japan, and has been lucky enough to arrive at the gate closest to the exit. If you have no checked baggage, you may be able to go through Immigration and Customs to the airport's exit in as little as five minutes after getting off the airplane in the best-case scenario (*1). Because of improved operations, the lines for the Immigration counters have recently become much shorter. There has also been an increase in the number of times when there is virtually no waiting, all of which has resulted in greatly lightening the burdens of passengers.

Next, although buses go to central Tokyo from Tokyo Narita Airport, let's use the railway system this time. All you have to do is take the escalator near the exit to the train station. We recommend both the Keisei Skyliner, which prides itself on speed and reasonable price, and the JR East Narita Express, which has an excellent network of connecting stations to major stations within the city. Tickets can easily be purchased at a counter or from a vending machine. You'll be inside the train car within minutes, and while relaxing in a reclining seat, you will reach central Tokyo (*2) in just 36 minutes (*3), with the Skyliner moving at a speed of 160 km/h (100 mph). If things go really well, you will arrive at the center of Tokyo less than an hour after getting off the airplane. These recent changes must be quite a surprise to people who had an impression in the past of Tokyo Narita Airport as distant and inconvenient.

Recently, the rapid increase in international flights at Haneda Airport, another international airport in the Tokyo region, has received a lot of attention. Because of its compact design, if you have no checked luggage, you may be able to go through Immigration and Customs to reach the airport's exit in just three minutes after disembarking from the airplane! If you continue to walk straight ahead for another minute, you will reach the Keihin Kyuko (Keikyu) train station on your right and the Tokyo Monorail station on your left. The distinguishing feature here is that after you have left the airplane itself, the route to the train station is completely flat and involves no going up and down. The Keikyu line speeds energetically through the city, whereas the Monorail seems to float through the air. No matter which one you choose, you will reach central Tokyo in about 15 minutes, while enjoying the city sights from the window. Thus, it is possible to reach central Tokyo within 30 minutes after disembarking from the plane. How's that for convenience?

To say that Tokyo's airports are distant and inconvenient is now an old tale. After you try one of these airports, you will find that seeing is believing!

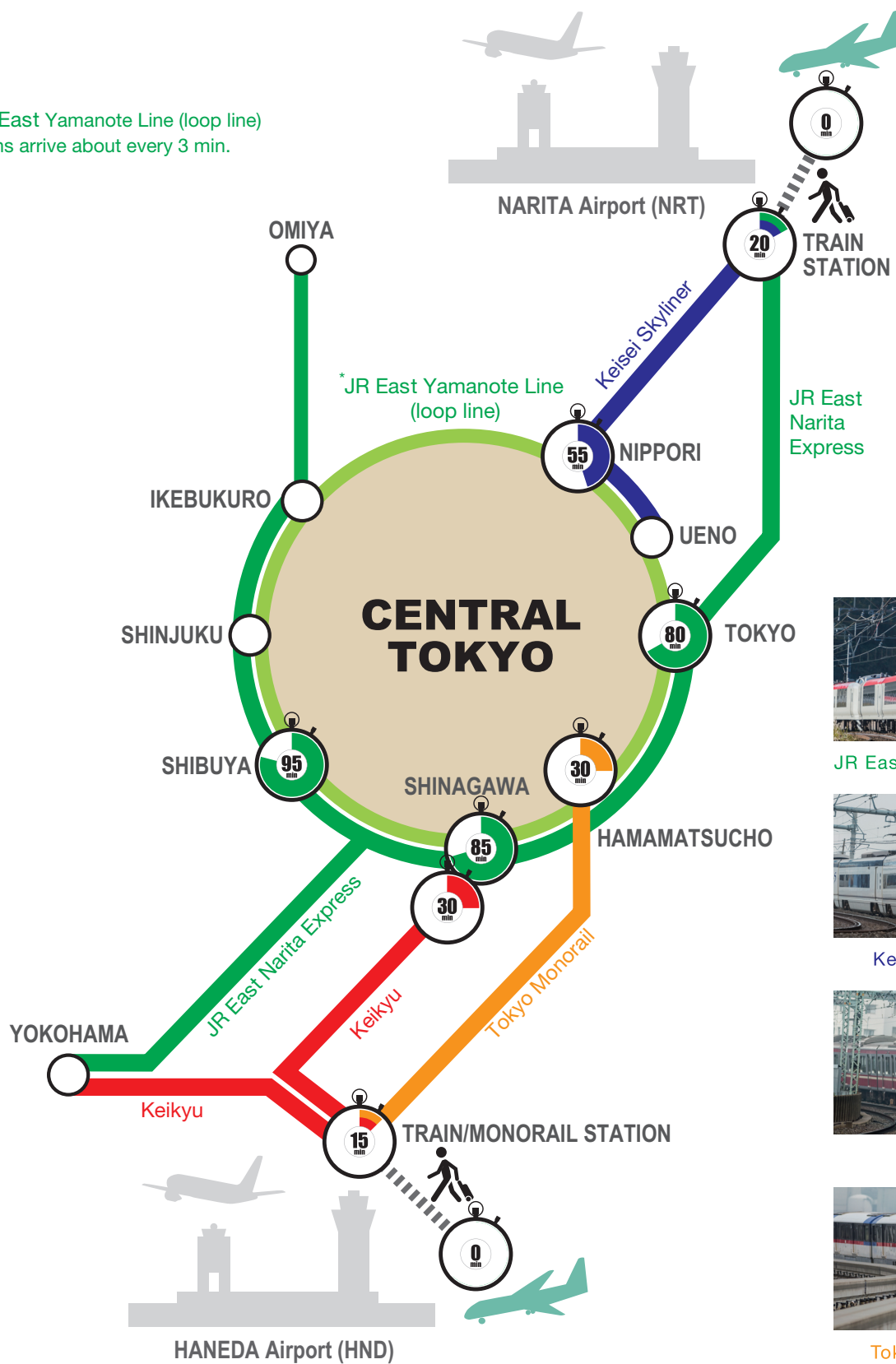
(*1) Cases in which there is no waiting in the line for the Immigration counter and nothing to declare at Customs beyond the range of items allowed into Japan tax-free.

(*2) "Central Tokyo" here refers to stations on the JR East Yamanote Line (loop line), which links various terminals in the city center.

(*3) This is the time needed to reach Nippori station, which is served by both the Keisei and JR East lines.

Railway Access to Central Tokyo Area from Airports

* JR East Yamanote Line (loop line)
trains arrive about every 3 min.



Free Wi-Fi Expands!

More Convenient, Free Wi-Fi Hotspots

Imagine that you've just arrived in Japan and are at the airport, wondering how to get into the city. That's the moment you'll want to use your smartphone or tablet. Rest assured that free Wi-Fi services are now available at major airports in Japan, so you can be sure of finding the information you need. Simple procedures such as typing in your email address on the spot, will get you Internet access.

You then take the rail link into the city and now you're at the station, but you don't know how to get to your destination from there. Once again, you turn to your mobile device for help. Fortunately, free wireless services are now accessible in major stations in central Tokyo and many bullet train stations. And because stations are in the process of being upgraded with Wi-Fi hotspots, access should become even more convenient in future.

In Japan users generally connect to the Internet from mobile devices via the mobile phone company with which they have a contract. This is because of the widespread system of charging a fixed rate for data transmission based on mobile phone contracts. It also explains why Wi-Fi hotspots not based on contracts with a mobile phone company have not spread rapidly. Visitors from overseas who are used to an environment with a wide network of free Wi-Fi hotspots would not find this very convenient.

Recently, however, the situation has begun to change greatly. Throughout cities, wireless services are increasingly being set up at major hotels, in some shopping districts, restaurants, coffee shops, and convenience stores, making access to a free wireless network possible even without a contract with a mobile phone company. Some of Japan's famous vending machines have even been turned into free Wi-Fi hotspots, a novel wireless connection that you might like to look out for.

You also might like to ask about the free Wi-Fi cards distributed by some telecommunications providers at locations such as tourist information counters and airports. These have limits on the connection time, but being able to use the numerous Wi-Fi hotspots set up by that provider for free will make finding connections easier and more convenient.

We hope you will try the free Wi-Fi services available now in Japan and see for yourself how much progress has been made. In the meantime, we are working on providing greater ease of access for smartphones and tablets in the future.

Free Wi-Fi Access in Japan Just Keeps on Expanding!

Wi-Fi at Airports and Stations



Narita Airport

You can use free Wi-Fi anywhere in Terminals 1 and 2.



Kansai Airport

You can use free Wi-Fi anywhere in Terminal 1 and AeroPlaza.



JR East

You can use free Wi-Fi at 16 JR East stations around the Yamanote Line (loop line).



Tokyo Metro

You can use free Wi-Fi within most stations.

Wi-Fi in Town



Ginza area

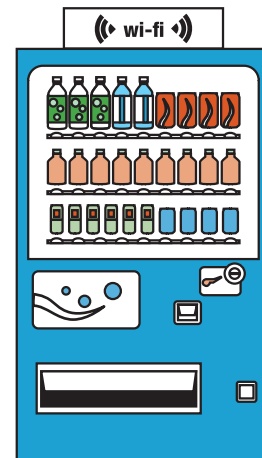


Fukuoka City



Cafes

Many shopping areas and stores now offer free Wi-Fi, meaning that you can use the internet in streets and underground shopping malls such as Ginza in Tokyo and Tenjin in Fukuoka. Wi-Fi services are also being offered at more and more cafes and convenience stores.



NTT East

NTT East is offering a free ID/Pass card for tourists from overseas, which grants 14 days' access to NTT Wi-Fi spots. The cards come in a range of unique regional designs produced in conjunction with various local authorities and can be found at some tourist information centers, airports and elsewhere.

Wi-Fi spots@vending machines

There are now vending machines with built-in Wi-Fi spots at 500 locations in Japan.

Japanese Customs

We'd like to share a couple of little secrets
that can make your time in Japan more enjoyable.



Japanese people like it quiet.

The Japanese have a reputation for being taciturn and hard to communicate with. Probably the most difficult part of Japanese communication for people from other countries is the way people here converse wordlessly.

When Japanese people are standing silently at some natural attraction, they're using their five senses to feel nature and commune with it. So if you notice some quiet Japanese in such a spot, you might try joining them in their silence, taking in everything around you with all your senses: light, wind, sky, clouds, sounds, smells.

Even when nobody is talking, there is plenty of communication going on in Japan.

About the artist: Sachiko Aoki is a manga artist whose Chabashira Club series focuses on the world of tea to delve into human relations. The third volume in particular looks at relations between Japan and Taiwan with tea as the motif.

When Japanese people have fun, they enjoy themselves wholeheartedly. If you possibly can, try to see a *matsuri*, a Japanese festival, while you're in Japan. Some of them are big events with great throngs of participants and viewers from Japan and abroad, but there are also many intimate local *matsuri* at little neighborhood shrines all over the country.

If you go to a *matsuri*, you can expect to find food stalls offering familiar dishes and perhaps some things you have never seen. So this is another way of sampling Japanese cuisine.

You say you don't speak Japanese? Don't let that stop you. You can use an app on your smartphone to interpret for you. And if you can't rely on your phone, you can probably remember *Kon-nichi wa*, meaning "Hello!", and *Arigato*, meaning "Thank you." Those two are a good start.



Three magic words will go a long way.

In addition, there are three simple words that will let you share your feelings with Japanese people:

Oishii: This is so delicious.

Tanoshii: I'm having so much fun.

Ureshii: I'm so happy.

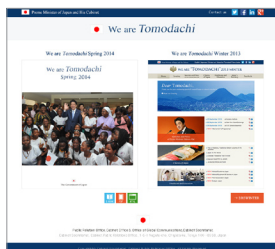
Especially if you try some food and like it, say *Oishii*, and you will surely see a Japanese smile.

And if you want to learn more about Japan, how about taking part in JET, the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme? Come here as a language teacher, helping young Japanese people learn your language while you deepen your knowledge of Japan.

Introducing Related Websites

The following websites offer information from various ministries, tourist information, and other information relating to the contents of this magazine.

We Are *Tomodachi*



Public Relations Office, Cabinet Office
Office of Global Communications, Cabinet Secretariat

Website of Tomodachi Project, the publisher of the e-magazine. Back issues also available.

HP <http://japan.kantei.go.jp/letters/>

Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet



Cabinet Public Relations Office, Cabinet Secretariat

Information in English about Japanese government policies, speeches and statements by the prime minister, and press conferences by the chief cabinet secretary.

HP <http://japan.kantei.go.jp>

f <https://www.facebook.com/Japan.PMO>

t https://twitter.com/JPN_PMO

Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet (Chinese)



Cabinet Public Relations Office, Cabinet Secretariat

Information in Chinese about Japanese government policies and speeches and statements by the prime minister.

HP <http://www.kantei.go.jp/cn/>

Japanese Government Internet TV



Public Relations Office, Cabinet Office

Videos from the Japanese government relating to the prime minister, press conferences by the chief cabinet secretary, videos of the imperial family, and more.

HP <http://nettv.gov-online.go.jp/eng/>

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Information from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with links to embassies and consulates overseas.

HP <http://www.mofa.go.jp>

f <https://www.facebook.com/Mofa.Japan.en>

t https://twitter.com/MofaJapan_en

Ministry of Defense



Ministry of Defense

Information about the ministry and Japan's Self-Defense Forces. Includes many videos and photos, along with Japan's Defense White Paper.

HP <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/>

p.36-39

Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat



p.50-53

Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat

Information relating to the territorial issues of Japan and the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands.

HP http://www.cas.go.jp/jp/ryodo_eg/

Abductions of Japanese Citizens by North Korea



p.54-55

Secretariat of the Headquarters for the Abduction Issue

Information concerning the abduction of Japanese nationals by North Korea. In English, Korean, Chinese, Russian, and other languages.

HP <http://www.rachi.go.jp/en/>

Japan National Tourism Organization



Tourism

Japan National Tourism Organization

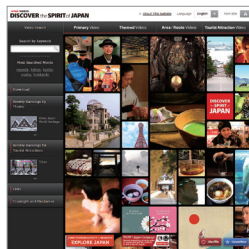
Information about tourism in Japan, including videos and photos. In English and many other languages, including Chinese, Korean, French, and German.

HP <http://www.jnto.go.jp/>

f <http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/fb/index.html>

(US) https://twitter.com/Visit_Japan

JAPAN VIDEOS - DISCOVER the SPIRIT of JAPAN



Tourism

Japan Tourism Agency

Videos showing various aspects of Japan, grouped by topic and region for reference by visitors to Japan.

HP <http://www.visitjapan.jp/en/>

Japanese foods. Your quality time.



Japanese Cuisine

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

Videos of Japanese cuisine and food ingredients, links to Japanese-food-related websites.

HP http://www.maff.go.jp/e/jf_yqt/index.html

Official Homepage of the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme



JET Programme

Council of Local Authorities for International Relations

Information about the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme.

HP <http://www.jetprogramme.org>

f <https://www.facebook.com/pages/JET-Programme/219440938121634>

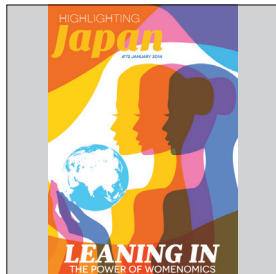
(US) <https://twitter.com/JETProgram>

Publications

Official Publications from the Government of Japan

The government of Japan publishes the following periodicals.
We would be pleased if you find them helpful for understanding
the current policies of the Japanese government.

Cabinet Office



“Highlighting JAPAN”

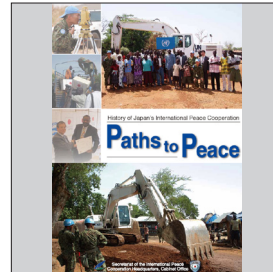
Aimed at people in other countries, this regular publication introduces the latest major government policies.

<http://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/index.html>



Published monthly
(11 times a year)

Cabinet Office



“Paths to Peace”

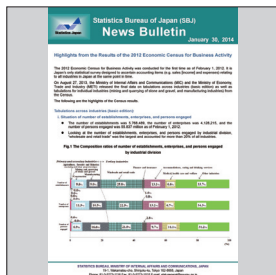
Introduces basic information concerning Japan's international peace and cooperation activities.

http://www.pko.go.jp/pko_j/info/other/other_data03.html



Once a year

Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications



“News Bulletin”

Presents in a newslike format the current activities of the Statistics Bureau of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the results of recent statistical evaluations.

<http://www.stat.go.jp/english/info/news/index.htm>



Once or twice a month
(not published in some months)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs



“niponica”

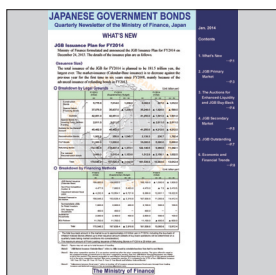
Using beautiful photographs, this journal illustrates the appeal of present-day Japan.

http://web-japan.org/niponica/index_en.html



Three times a year

Ministry of Finance



“Quarterly Newsletter”

Introduces recent important topics related to the Japanese Government Bond market, in addition to basic information concerning the national debt.

<http://www.mof.go.jp/english/jgbs/publication/newsletter/index.htm>



Four times a year

Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology



“NWECS Newsletter”

Describes the activities of the National Women's Education Center (NWECS), an independent administrative agency, and the social conditions of women in Japan.

<http://www.nwec.jp/jp/bulletin/news-letter/>



Twice a year

Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry



“METI Journal”

Explains policies being instituted by the Ministry of Economy, Trade, and Industry (METI) in an easy-to-understand manner.

<http://www.meti.go.jp/english/publications/index.html>



Six times a year
(bimonthly)

Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism



“Monthly Web Magazine”

Transmits seasonal and updated information on the Internet every month on three features.

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/indepth/exotic/JapanesQue/>



Once a month

Ministry of the Environment



“Japan Environment Quarterly (JEQ)”

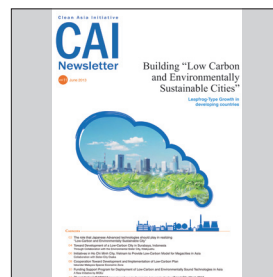
Describes activities by the Ministry of the Environment and runs columns by companies, NGOs, and officials who work abroad.

<http://www.env.go.jp/en/focus/jeq/index.html>



Four times a year

Ministry of the Environment



“CAI Newsletter”

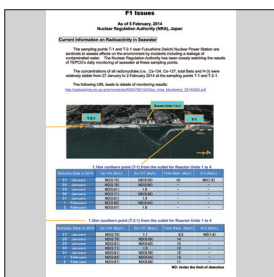
Transmits news about strategic international cooperation efforts, such as the Clean Asia Initiative, which promotes international cooperation on the environment.

http://www.env.go.jp/earth/coop/coop/english/cai/news_pam.html



Two or three times a year

Nuclear Regulation Authority



“F1 Issues Fukushima Daiichi NPS's Issues”

This releases information about the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, such as details about the monitoring of seawater since the accident caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake and subsequent tsunami.

<http://www.nsr.go.jp/english/>



About once a week

Ministry of Defense



“Japan Defense Focus”

A monthly magazine that introduces various activities of the Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces.

<http://www.mod.go.jp/e/jdf/index.html#sub01>



Once a month

Let us update you on recent happenings in Japan.
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<http://japan.kantei.go.jp/letters/>

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Links to the websites of ministries

Cabinet Office <http://www.cao.go.jp/index-e.html>
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries <http://www.maff.go.jp/e/>
Ministry of Defense <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/>
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry <http://www.meti.go.jp/english/>
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology <http://www.mext.go.jp/english/>
Ministry of the Environment <http://www.env.go.jp/en/>
Ministry of Finance <https://www.mof.go.jp/english/index.htm>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.mofa.go.jp>
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/>
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications <http://www.soumu.go.jp/english/index.html>
Ministry of Justice <http://www.moj.go.jp/ENGLISH/index.html>
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism <https://www.mlit.go.jp/en/>
Reconstruction Agency <http://www.reconstruction.go.jp/english/>
Nuclear Regulation Authority <http://www.nsr.go.jp/english/>

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The Government of Japan