

Special Issue

KIZUNA

Winter
2021

Linking Japan and the World



JAPAN GOV
THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN



Welcome to KIZUNA, the official magazine of the Government of Japan.

This bold work of calligraphy is 絆 (*kizuna*) written in Japanese. *Kizuna* means the enduring bonds between people—close relationships forged through mutual trust and support.

Originally describing the rope used to tether domestic animals such as horses and dogs, the meaning of *kizuna* has evolved over the years. A passage in *The Tale of the Heike*, compiled in the 13th century, uses the term to refer to the bonds of love between a father and his children. More recently, *kizuna* has gone beyond bonds tying together family and close acquaintances; it is now used in a broader sense of human ties and connections. Of particular note is the *kizuna* born among people during natural calamities, which fosters feelings of solidarity and serves as the underlying strength to overcome hardships.

Similarly, the *kizuna* cultivated among the countries of the world has the power to deepen cooperation for a better future. By reporting on a wide variety of topics concerning Japan, we hope that this magazine will provide opportunities for Japan and the rest of the world to connect and build strong *kizuna*.



KANAZAWA SHOKO
Calligraphy Artist

Born in Tokyo in 1985, she started learning calligraphy from her mother when she was five years old. One of the notable young calligraphers of today, her solo exhibitions have been held throughout the world, in cities such as New York, Singapore, and Prague. She was selected as one of the official poster artists for Tokyo 2020.

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<https://www.japan.go.jp/kizuna/>

Special Issue

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Winter 2021

COVER

At a press conference held on October 14 2021, the new prime minister KISHIDA Fumio declared that he would swiftly take action against COVID-19 and implement economic measures.

THE FIRST POLICY SPEECH

BY PRIME MINISTER KISHIDA FUMIO

AN EXCERPT

OCTOBER 8, 2021

Full Text: https://japan.kantei.go.jp/100_kishida/statement/202110/_00005.html

Introduction

I am resolved to invest all my heart, mind, and strength to overcome this national crisis, the battle against COVID-19, together with the Japanese people, carve out a new era, and hand down to the next generation a Japan that is spiritually rich.

What is required of us now is to engage in politics worthy of trust and sympathy that reacts to citizens' voices with sincerity and gives those voices concrete shape. I will place importance on having thorough discussions with the citizens. I myself and indeed all the members of my Cabinet will repeatedly sit down in a circle with various kinds of people to have discussions. Beyond that, I will instruct them to do comprehensive checks on whether or not we are advancing policies well-tailored to the people's needs.

It will be upon the trust and sympathy earned through this process that I aim to foster a society that respects diversity. My mission is to arouse the power of the bonds Japan enjoys.

Measures to counter COVID-19

The essential element of crisis response is assuming the worst possible situation at all times. Now that the number of new infections is holding at a low, steady level, this is the time for us to anticipate various situations and take comprehensive steps to ensure peace of mind. We will reliably secure hospital bed capacity and medical personnel and thoroughly set measures in place to assist patients recuperating at home.

We will forge ahead with administering a second vaccine dose to all those wishing to receive one while also making careful preparations to enable the administration of a third round of vaccinations. We will also aim to have orally administered pharmaceutical treatments enter into practical application within the calendar year. Alongside this, we will work to make active use of digital vaccination certificates and expand free-of-charge testing for which

advance reservations are not required.

To support business owners who have suffered significant impacts, we will provide subsidies in proportion to the size of the business, in a form that does not impose limits on the location or type of business. We will also implement support in the form of subsidies and other assistance to protect those in need, including non-regular employees and families with small children.

Bringing a new form of capitalism into realization

What I aim to do is to bring a new form of capitalism into realization. The concept is this: a virtuous cycle of growth and distribution, and developing a new post-COVID-19 society. I will establish a Council of New Form of Capitalism Realization and shape that vision into something concrete. Aiming for growth is absolutely critical, and we will make every possible effort towards actualizing it. However, without distribution, there will be no subsequent growth; this point too, I thoroughly endorse. We will extricate ourselves from the barren argument of "growth or distribution" and conduct a general mobilization of all possible policies to bring about "growth and distribution."

Our growth strategy and our distribution strategy are two sides of the same coin by which we bring about a new form of capitalism.

The first pillar of my growth strategy is realizing a science and technology nation. We will boldly fund research and development in advanced science and technology, including in the areas of digital, green, artificial intelligence, quantum, bio, and space.

The second pillar is revitalizing regions and a Vision for a Digital Garden City Nation, which will link to the rest of the world. We will advance the implementation of digital transformation beginning with our local regions and give rise to a wave of new reforms.

The third pillar is economic security. Under a newly

established ministerial remit, we will advance our efforts to secure strategic goods and materials and prevent outflows of technology, while will materialize an autonomous economic structure.

The fourth pillar is putting to rest people's anxiety about the era of hundred-year lifespans. We will make social security and the tax system neutral with regard to ways of working and endeavor to make universal workers' insurance a reality. Looking ahead, we will work to build a social security system oriented to all generations in which all people, from children and those raising a family to the elderly, can feel assured.

Next is our distribution strategy.

The first pillar is strengthening the function for distributions to working people. We will fundamentally strengthen our support within the tax code for companies that raise wages in an effort to increase the percentage of distributions allocated to labor.

The second pillar is enlarging the middle class and addressing the declining birth rate. We will reinforce our support for educational expenses and living expenses to provide support for families with small children.

The third pillar is increasing the incomes of those working at facilities providing medical nursing, elderly care, childcare services and the like. We will examine public prices and fundamentally review the state of public prices.

My fourth pillar is correcting the harmful effects resulting from deciding public finances on a single fiscal year basis, which determines public distribution.

In addition to these, we will actively invest in building up basic infrastructure as a step towards regional revitalization. Without reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake, there will be no revival of Japan. In keeping with my strong feelings on this, we will work exhaustively to realize assistance for disaster victims, the rebuilding of industries and livelihoods, and the reconstruction and revival of Fukushima.

Diplomacy and security that fully protect the Japanese people

On the basis of trust we enjoy from the international community, I will pursue resolute diplomacy in three areas in which I hold strong determination.

The first of these is my determination to fully defend the universal values of freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. I will vigorously promote a free

and open Indo-Pacific.

Second is my determination to fully safeguard the peace and stability of Japan. We will undertake revisions to our National Security Strategy, National Defense Program Guidelines, and Mid-Term Defense Program. The cornerstone of Japan's diplomatic and security policies is the Japan-U.S. Alliance, which I will raise to an even greater height. The abductions issue is one of the highest priority issues of the Kishida administration. I will do everything in my power to realize the return of all the abductees to Japan at the earliest possible date.

Third is my determination to lead the international community by confronting global-level issues and contributing to humankind. As a prime minister hailing from Hiroshima, the site of an atomic bombing, I will do my very utmost to bring about a world free of nuclear weapons.

New economic countermeasures

I instructed my Cabinet to take all possible measures to respond to COVID-19 and to formulate new economic policies in order to trigger a new form of capitalism. We will swiftly compile comprehensive and bold economic policies.

Conclusion

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."

We must overcome the divisions arising from economic disparities, regional disparities, and the like and carve out a new era. To make that possible, we will forge one team aimed at all of us moving forward together. Every night eventually turns into dawn. Holding hands together with you, the citizens, we will take a step towards tomorrow. ●



PRIME MINISTER KISHIDA FUMIO'S PERSONAL TIMELINE



On October 4, Kishida conducted his first press conference as prime minister.

July 29, 1957
Born in Tokyo

Kishida was born in Tokyo in the early years of Japan's economic boom—when the country was getting back on its feet after the war—as the son of KISHIDA Fumitake, a government official at the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (currently the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry). His grandfather, KISHIDA Masaki, was a successful department store proprietor who also served as a member of the House of Representatives.

1963
Moves to New York

When his father was assigned to work in the United States, the family moved to New York. Kishida attended a local public elementary school from the first to third grades, where he was impressed by the liberal ambience of the U.S. and learned to respect diversity.



Kishida (top row, second from right) with classmates in Queens, New York.

1973
Student Days

After returning to Japan, Kishida attended public elementary and middle schools before going on to Kaisei Senior High School, a prestigious private academy. He was an enthusiastic member of the baseball team, an experience that taught him the importance of working together as a team. In 1978, he entered the School of Law at Waseda University. When his father ran for the House of Representatives for the first time the following year, Kishida helped him to campaign.



Kishida (center) played second base for his high school team.

1982
Gains Work Experience at a Bank

After graduating, Kishida joined the Long-Term Credit Bank of Japan (currently Shinsei Bank). He worked in foreign exchange in Tokyo and was subsequently transferred to the city of Takamatsu in Kagawa Prefecture where his clients included maritime shipping firms. He gained firsthand knowledge of the unfavorable economic reality there by watching small and medium-sized enterprises sometimes founder and fail due to cash-flow problems.

1993

Joins the Political World

Helping his father's campaign and working for a bank awakened in Kishida an urge to serve the people directly by protecting their lives and improving society as a whole. That set him on his way to politics. In 1993, after his father's death, he ran for his father's seat in a district in Hiroshima and won his first political battle. He valued political stumping as a way to speak directly to voters—an approach that broadened his appeal and led to his winning the seat 10 times.



Kishida receives his parliamentary badge after being elected to the House of Representatives for the first time.

2007

Receives First Cabinet Posting

Kishida joined the Cabinet for the first time as a Minister of State for Special Missions, a position in which he took on assignments in various fields including Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs, Quality-of-Life Policy, and Science and Technology Policy. He became Minister for Consumer Affairs in 2008, a position from which he worked for the establishment of the Consumer Affairs Agency.



Kishida favors a hands-on approach and has visited many places throughout the country.

2012

Appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs

In 2015, Kishida strove for the bilateral agreement between Japan and the Republic of Korea regarding the issue of comfort women which was "resolved finally and irreversibly." In 2016, he helped to actualize a visit to Hiroshima by President Barack Obama, the first ever such visit by a sitting U.S. president. Kishida served as Minister of Foreign Affairs consecutively for four years and seven months, making him the longest-serving foreign minister in postwar Japan.



Top: Kishida visited New York in 2016 to attend a G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting as the chair.

Left: Kishida explains the symbolism of the Atomic Bomb Dome to U.S. President Obama.

October 4, 2021

Becomes Prime Minister

Upon winning the election for Liberal Democratic Party president, Kishida was appointed Prime Minister of Japan by an extraordinary session of the Diet. He vowed to lend a sincere ear to the voices of the Japanese people and to conduct politics in an attentive and broad-minded manner.

Kishida filled nearly 30 notebooks in 10 years with comments and appeals from the people of Japan.



His favorite food is Hiroshima-style *okonomiyaki* (Japanese savory pancake). He ate the dish on the day that he was elected to head the Liberal Democratic Party. "I'll never forget how wonderful it tasted," he says.

PRIME MINISTER'S FIRST OVERSEAS TRIP

COP26 WORLD LEADERS SUMMIT STATEMENT

NOVEMBER 2, 2021

https://japan.kantei.go.jp/100_kishida/statement/202111/_00002.html

On November 2, Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio visited Glasgow, the United Kingdom on his first overseas trip to attend the World Leaders Summit of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) and other events.

On that occasion, the prime minister held bilateral summit meetings with the leaders of the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Viet Nam, and with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. He also exchanged words with many other heads of state.

In his speech at the World Leaders Summit, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his own determination that Japan would work in full force to take on climate change, a common challenge of humankind. The following is the full text of his speech.



Prime Minister Kishida attended the World Leaders Summit of the COP26 in the U.K. There, he pledged to provide up to an additional 10 billion USD in the coming five years to support the decarbonization of Asia and beyond.

At the outset, let me start by commending my friend, Boris, for his leadership in hosting the COP 26.

I have come all the way to Glasgow to convey my own determination that Japan will be working in full force to take on climate change, a common challenge of humankind.

Six years have passed since the adoption of the Paris Agreement. At that time, under the leadership

of then President Laurent Fabius, we had renewed our resolve. We must not forget that very moment. “Fumio, I really want to give this to you.” To this day, I have been keeping and cherishing the gavel that my friend Laurent presented to me as a testament to my own resolution to confront the climate issue seriously.

To achieve our goal, this coming decade will be critical. Together, with high ambitions, let us do all

we can going forward!

“Net-zero by 2050”; Japan will realize this goal under our newly adopted Long-term Strategy.

I assure that Japan aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in the fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, and that Japan will continue strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%.

Mr. President,

To bring about a decarbonized society, Japan will introduce renewable energy as much as possible, and lead the way in the clean energy transition, with a particular focus on Asia.

Since solar power plays a major role in the transition to renewables in Asia, to help stabilize electrical frequency in the region, converting existing thermal power generations into zero-emission power generation is a necessary path. To this end, Japan, through the Asia Energy Transition Initiative, will develop leading projects worth 100 million USD to transform fossil-fuel-fired thermal power into zero-emission thermal power such as ammonia and hydrogen. Developed countries are collectively committed to the 100 billion USD per year goal of climate finance. However, we have not yet achieved this target. In order to lead the initiative in fulfilling this financial gap, today, I am pleased to announce our additional contribution. Japan announced last June our contribution to provide support worth 60 billion USD, both in public and private finance, in the next five years. On top of that, Japan will provide up to 10 billion USD in the coming five years, which would include our contribution to the launch of Innovative Financial Facility for Climate as we partner with the Asian Development Bank and others to support the decarbonization of Asia and beyond.

Together with Boris, Japan will call on other developed countries to join us in our collective efforts.

Capitalizing on these initiatives, Japan will press onward to undertake efforts toward net-zero emissions in Asia, the engine of global economic growth.

With an aim to realizing a future where vehicles, the world’s essentials, will become zero emission, Japan will take advantage of all the available options of technologies.



Top: At a high-level event on infrastructure and climate change, Prime Minister Kishida said that he would lead the international community’s commitment to achieving a better recovery from COVID-19.

Right: In between the meetings, the prime minister actively engaged in summit diplomacy including talks with President Joe Biden of the United States.



By utilizing our own 2 trillion yen Green Innovation Fund, Japan will develop next-generation batteries and motors, hydrogen, and synthetic fuels, which all hold the key to the spread of electric vehicles.

While spreading the fruits of these innovations across Asia, Japan will spearhead global efforts.

Furthermore, Japan will be participating in the Global Methane Pledge. As we are moving forward in the transition to decarbonization, the ongoing issue of rising energy prices also calls for our joint discussions among leaders to meet the challenge.

For adaptation to climate change, Japan will double our assistance to approximately 14.8 billion USD such as in the area of disaster risk reduction. Concerning global forestry conservation, I hereby announce that Japan will provide financial assistance worth approximately 240 million USD, utilizing advanced technologies and working in collaboration with the international organizations.

No one must be left behind as we confront the issue of climate change. Japan will dedicate all its strength to undertake actions and contribute to the future of humankind.

Thank you. ●

TOWARD A NEW FORM OF CAPITALISM:

OUTLINE OF THE EMERGENCY PROPOSAL FROM THE COUNCIL OF NEW FORM OF CAPITALISM REALIZATION

NOVEMBER 8, 2021

https://japan.kantei.go.jp/ongoingtopics/_00001.html

At his inaugural press conference in October 2021, Japan's new prime minister KISHIDA Fumio announced his aim to realize a new form of capitalism.

There is a growing trend around the world to search out a capitalist economy for the new era in which corporations and governments make bold investments, while protecting the middle class—which forms the core of a healthy democracy—and preparing for global-scale crises such as climate change. The new initiative of the Kishida administration aims to take the lead of that global trend, focusing on sustainability and human capital.

The core concepts of the new initiative are “a virtuous cycle of growth and distribution” and “developing a new post-COVID-19 society.” Growth strategy and distribution strategy will work in tandem to realize them.

On November 8, the emergency proposal was formulated by the Council of New Form of Capitalism Realization, which was established to shape a vision toward the realization of a new form of capitalism and translate it into concrete measures. It emphasizes that growth must be realized first—positioning the growth strategy as the trigger for the virtuous circle of growth and distribution—while also stating that the distribution strategy serves as an essential foundation for sustainable growth. The proposal urges Japan to mobilize all possible policies toward the realization of the virtuous cycle of growth and distribution.

* * * * *

Outline of the basic ideas of the emergency proposal

Since the 1980s, a growing emphasis has been placed on short-term shareholder value, resulting in a sluggish growth of the middle class, widening disparities, an increasing burden on subcontractors, and adverse effects on the natural environment and others. Thus, the government, private sector,

universities, local communities, and citizens and consumers should all play their respective roles to solve pending issues. Private companies are requested to enhance their mid- to long-term earning power by strengthening their investments in the future in areas such as human capital, and to achieve sustainable growth by circulating their profits through wage increases and other distributions, as well as through further investment in the future. We are committed to building a sustainable capitalism focused on various stakeholders. While our basic principle is to realize economic growth by utilizing market functions, it is also important for the public and private sectors to work together to create an economy for a new era, with the government providing a supplementary response in areas that are not sufficiently addressed.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, people's mindset about their work style and lifestyle has changed, with digital transformation—which



Prime Minister Kishida established a Council of the New Form of Capitalism Realization to discuss concrete measures to realize a new form of capitalism.

The emergency proposal was formulated at the meeting held on November 8.



until now had not proceeded very far—suddenly beginning to make rapid progress. Now is the time to reform conventional socioeconomic practices and restrictions as well as institutions to build a new society premised on coexisting with COVID-19.

As a trigger for a virtuous cycle of growth and distribution, it is necessary to realize growth in the first place. We need to promote efforts to realize a science and technology nation, including those for digital transformation (DX) and growth of the green sector toward a solution to the climate change, thereby drastically strengthening our capacity for innovation. We also need to provide comprehensive support for startups as the driver of innovation that will carve out the future of Japan. It is also important to use innovation to solve social issues in a bid to create a highly convenient society and to promote the improvement of productivity in a wide range of industries and enterprises, thereby helping to create of a prosperous middle class.

Our distribution strategy serves as an important foundation for growth. Consumption is expected to increase through distribution to employees in the form of wages, which then stimulates demand, leading to improvement in corporate earnings and sustainable growth. In order to realize growth and distribution at the same time, it is necessary to strengthen investment in people through efforts ranging from those in childcare and early education, to those within companies. We must also respect diversity and inclusivity to create a society where all citizens can participate and play an active role and establish an environment where each individual can create added value.

From such perspectives, Japan should mobilize all possible policies toward the realization of a virtuous cycle of growth and distribution that will then achieve subsequent growth. To this end, it is essential to increase productivity through our growth strategy and to distribute the fruits of that growth in the form of wages to working people, thereby raising the income level of a broad range of citizens.

Issues to be addressed as an utmost priority

The emergency proposal outlines the multiple measures that should now be given utmost priority by the Kishida administration.

Under the growth strategy, the top priority is promoting the realization of a science and technology nation, to which end, a university fund will be established at a scale of 10 trillion yen during the current fiscal year. The second priority is promoting the revival of the dynamism of Japanese companies and providing comprehensive support for startups as the driver of innovation while simultaneously strengthening tax support for large companies assisting startups. The third priority is launching a Vision for a Digital Garden City Nation by implementing digital technology such as telework, drone delivery and autonomous driving, beginning with local regions. The fourth and final priority is promoting economic security. A fund will be established, with innovative technologies to be developed in crucial areas such as artificial intelligence and quantum technology.

Under the distribution strategy, the first course of action will be to provide support to the private sector to strengthen the distribution of wealth. Support will be drastically strengthened within the tax code for companies that raise wages to increase the percentage of the distribution allocated to labor. The second course of action will be to strengthen the distribution function in the public sector. Public prices will be revised to increase the incomes of those working at facilities providing medical nursing, elderly care, childcare services, and the like.

In response to this emergency proposal, the government will make a concerted effort to immediately address the matters outlined. The Council of a New Form of Capitalism Realization will continue to conduct brisk discussions to compile, by next spring, a grand design and an outline of the approaches to substantialize it, and will keep the world informed of its progress. ●



TRANQUILITY AND SERENITY:

A PEACEFUL JAPANESE WINTER

Surrounded by seas, the Japanese archipelago is surprisingly cold in winter, with plenty of snow. Its climate has given birth to fantastical scenery, fostering local, technical solutions.



H_YASUI/GETTY IMAGES

SEA FOG

The Seto Inland Sea is rimmed Honshu and the Island of Shikoku. On cold, bright winter mornings, this long, thin body of water produces a layer of fog when air laden with moisture becomes chilled. Superb views of the phenomenon can be enjoyed from the observatory in Mihara City, Hiroshima Prefecture, looking out over more than 700 islands and islets dotting the fog in a tapestry that never repeats itself, creating a magical fantasy world.



SNOWY GARDEN

Owing to the winds blowing in from the sea, the area facing the Sea of Japan has heavy, moist winter snows. At Kenroku-en Garden (Kanazawa City, Ishikawa Prefecture)—one of Japan’s finest with over 300 years of history—numerous pine trees are trussed with rope during the winter, giving extra support to branches laden with the heavy snow. The beautiful conical shapes, produced through traditional wisdom and skill, are topographical poems symbolizing the Japanese winter.



NEW YEAR'S DELICACIES

The Japanese New Year comes with special delicacies. The custom of placing lucky foods in tiered boxes and eating them at seasonal milestone originated as a way of expressing the concept “stacked with luck.” Each of the foods is made with long-lasting ingredients, enabling the entire family to eat leisurely during the New Year holiday period. In that way, Japanese people celebrate the beginning of the year in peace.

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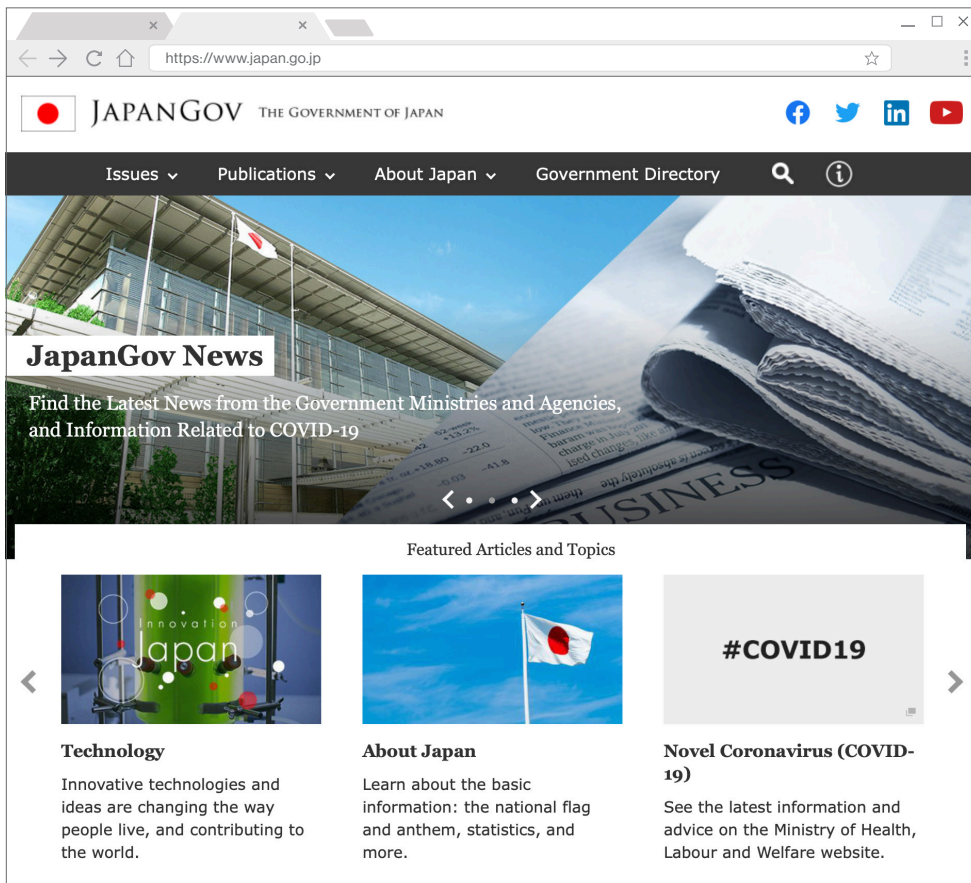
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