

CELEBRATING THE NEW YEAR TOGETHER WITH ALL JICA PARTICIPANTS ~HAVING HOPES~



Hopes and dreams, even just humble ones, cheer us up and encourage us. That is probably why we never lose hope. I sincerely wish that hope will bestow each of you with happiness.

Nevertheless, we are currently facing various problems.

The light and the shadow of the globalizing economy, as well as population problems, the depletion and uneven distribution of petroleum and other resources, global warming, conflicts, grinding poverty, and various kinds of threats that damage people's dignity — none of these problems can be solved easily, and we sometimes find ourselves far from great hope.

It is true that these problems are discussed seriously behind the scenes of international conferences where international organizations and NGOs meet, and also at smaller meetings. International organizations, NGOs, governments, donors, various groups and individuals are all making efforts in their own ways. It is easy to lament over our inabilities and to criticize the lack of immediate results, but it is more important to con-

sider each problem as our own, instead of someone else's, and to find even a small thing that we can do while understanding how difficult it is to find solutions, isn't it?

Any one of these problems is too large a burden for a single person to bear, and that is not how they should be tackled. They are burdens to be borne together by all of us, who share the same destiny in this modern era. We must reduce the burden of these problems for the next generation and pass on increased hope.

We have reaffirmed our determination to continue our efforts, together with you all, toward solving the various problems faced by people in developing countries. We aspire to take a small but steady step forward together. That is our greatest hope.



I sincerely wish that 2011 will be a year full of hope for each and every one of you.

Yuji Otake,

Director General, Tokyo International Center



Celebration of New Year in Japan

It is around the time of New Year's Day that the Japanese suddenly become traditional. Many travel back to their home towns to spend New Year's Day with their parents and relatives. On New Year's Eve, we eat *soba* noodles that represents long life, as the noodle is long, and at the turn of the year, listen to the sound of *joy-no-kane*, or 108 tolls of the great bells at Buddhist temples, to get rid of 108 sins that Buddhism tells us each person has.

Many go to temples and shrines to wish for healthy and prosperous New Year right after the midnight, while the other wait until morning. In the morning of the New Year's Day, after observing the year's first sunrise, we eat rice cakes in soup (*zoni*) and *osechi*, a kind of a pre-prepared lunch box, and drink sweetened rice wine with medicinal herbs (*tozo*). Also, people, especially relatives, visit each other (*nenshi matauri*) to exchange New Year's greetings. Children are very excited about this visit, as they get special allowance (*otoshidama*) for the New Year from relatives.





Where

to

see

events

around

New

Year's

Day

January through March is a good season for viewing Japanese traditional events. The largest happen during the first three days of new year, when most, if not all Japanese, visit Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples to make new year wishes, see or take part in ceremonies to celebrate the new year, and enjoy shopping or eating at many stalls. If you want to visit temples and shrines at this time, you may want to avoid the most famous ones, such as Meiji Jingu or Asakusa as they are incredibly crowded with more than three million visitors around New Year's Day. Here is a list of the major temples and shrines (but not the most visited ones), which you can easily visit using Keio Line (or Toei Shinjuku Line connected to Keio New Line) and Chiyoda Line without making transfers. These places are still very crowded, so when you visit them around New Year's Day, please be very careful not to lose your way and your belongings.

These places also give opportunities to watch *Mame maki* (bean throwing) ceremonies on the day of *Setsubun* (February 3rd), that has meaning of getting rid of evil spirits and bringing luck into families. Of course, even when there are no events, you will still enjoy walking in and around these spots.

Takahata Fudouson (Kongoji Temple):

A 5-minute walk from Keio Line Takahatafudo Station

Kongoji Temple of Shingon School Buddhism was founded in early Heian period, about 1100 years ago. The oldest remaining building was built in 1342.

Futa Tenjin:

A 7-minute walk from Keio Line Chofu Station

As one of the oldest Shinto shrines in the Tama district of Western Tokyo, Futa Tenjin is said to have been built 1940 years ago, according to the shrine's document.

Yakuoin (Yukiji Temple) :

A 1 hour walk from Keio Line Takaosanguchi Station

Located on top of Mt. Takao, you can visit this temple easily by taking a cable car or chairlifts, but you might reach the top on foot earlier than waiting for transportation. You will enjoy seeing *Hiwatari sai* (fire walking festival), when priests walk on burning wood on March 14th.

Sanno Hie Jinja:

A 5-minute walk from Chiyoda line Kokkaigijidomae Station

Housing the guardian deity of Edo Castle (The present-day Imperial Palace), Hie Shrine has been a highly respected place of worship for the people of Tokyo.

Yushima Tenjin:

A 2-minute walk from Chiyoda Line Yushima Station

One of many Tenjin shrines, Yushima Tenjin enshrines Sugawara no Michizane, a god of scholarship. There is a Plum Blossom Festival between end of February and early March.

Yasukuni Jinja :

A 5-minute walk from Toei Shinjuku Line Kudanshita Station

It enshrines war dead soldiers from the 19th Century until the World War II. An excellent place to see 800 cherry trees in blossom in the end of March.

If you want to see the Imperial Palace, **January 2nd** is the day when anyone can enter the palace (formerly the castle for *Tokugawa Shogun*), on which the Imperial Family waves at the crowd and gives a new year's address.



New Year Messages from JICA TOKYO ALUMNI

JICA Tokyo has received some New Year Messages from ex-participants stayed with us last year. We are grateful to these alumni for sending us these heart warming messages, and are always looking forward to hearing from JICA Alumni and knowing their activities. Thank you Tatiana and Orgil!

How we celebrate Tsagaan Sar -Mongolian New Year

Happy New Year! Let me tell you about the festival of *Tsagaan Sar*, celebrated in or around February. It is the day when people express respect to elder people and relatives, renew friendship and sympathy to each other and reconfirm family ties. The *Tsagaan Sar* eve or the last day of winter called "Bituun", which means "full darkness" with no moon is visible in the sky. On this day people eat to be really full. It is believed that if you stay hungry, you will be hungry for an entire year.



Tsagaan Sar signifies the beginning of spring, though steppes are still covered with snow. Before sunrise, all men go to the top of a nearby hill or mountain carrying food and make a prayer to the Nature and the State. Then, men go to certain directions prescribed by the Buddhist horoscope. People believe that it is important to start your way in the right direction on the first day of the new year in order to be lucky all year round.



Orgil in traditional Japanese summer cloth, yukata

With the sunrise, the greeting ceremony starts inside the family. Everybody greets each other except husband and wife. When the greeting ceremony is over, everyone sits behind the table and starts exchanging "Khoorog" (a snuff bottle usually made of semi-precious stones and filled with finely pulverized tobacco). The typical greeting words are "Does your 2-year old horse have enough fat on the withers? (means good health), does your 2-year old yak have enough muscles? (means good power), did all your animals pass winter safely?" Exchanging Khoorog means expressing friendly intentions to each other and is usually the starting point of introducing a stranger.

People eat a lot of "Booz" (steamed Mongolian dumplings) and drink "Airag" (fermented mare's milk). When the ceremony finishes in the family, the hosts give presents to each person. The present symbolizes a wish for wellbeing, health, wealth and power.



Ms. NAVAAN Orgil participating "Practical Corporate Management for Productivity Improvement" course

NAVAAN Orgil

(Ex-participant of the "Practical Corporate Management for Productivity Improvement" May-July 2010)

Happy New Year From Bolivia (but with part of my heart still in Japan)



Ms. Tatiana Mariaca Almaraz in her Waca Waca (cattle) folkloric dance costume



Tatiana (center) in another folkloric dance, Diabla (dance of devil) costume of white bear

I want to send all of you my best wishes for the year 2011! I'm grateful to 2010 for giving me the opportunity to travel to Japan and to meet beautiful people with hearts full of love and willingness to share their knowledge. I've learned valuable lessons from these people and am working hard to share it now in my country.



Ms. Tatiana MARIACA ALMARAZ (right) participating "Workshop on Improving Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health" course

Let me share with you some traditions we have in Bolivia for New Year, some of which are old and others new, with foreign influences.

At mid night on the 31st December the tradition is to eat pork, which is supposed to bring good luck, especially economically, although we might also eat turkey and sea food. At the same time we also eat 12 grapes representing good luck for the 12 new months, count money to have money and hug our friends and family. Some people run around the block or go upstairs with a suitcase, that symbolizes trips, and we make a toast with champagne.

Personally I wish in my heart, all the best for the people I care for, and this year my friends from Japan and other countries, whom I had the chance to meet at JICA Tokyo, will be included in my wishes.

Lots of love and thousands of hugs, from Bolivia to all of you and peace in your hearts.

Tatiana MARIACA ALMARAZ

(Ex-participant of the "Workshop on Improving Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive Health" June-July 2010)

Participants join Global Festa!

Once a year in October, we celebrate "Global Festa", to commemorate the beginning of Japan's international development cooperation on October 6, 1954, when it joined the Colombo Plan. This year, the two day festival was held on the 2nd and 3rd of October, with 287 groups, including JICA, opening their booths and more than 100 thousand visitors. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Global Festa, through which participating groups have called for understanding and cooperation in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).



JICA Tokyo staff and participants pose for camera on the stage at Global Festa

Here are some comments from the JICA Tokyo participants who joined the stage events:



JICA Tokyo's staff member Ms. Nishigaki interviews participant Mr. Pema Dorji

I took part in the Global Festival at Hibiya Park on October 3rd. An era never before seen and celebrated of the human spirit wrapped inside a vibrant joy. Where various peoples come together as one, unite and share the earth as a whole. "Immensely Enjoyable" I felt that JICA has given me the opportunity to gain an insight into the MDGs. I was very interested to find out about eradicating extreme poverty, reducing child mortality rates, fighting epidemics and developing a global development partnership.

I have also learnt a famous Japanese song, which will be green in my heart and green forever.

So, I am very happy to have a wonderful autumn in Japan with compassionate and warm-hearted Japanese helping those developing countries. I will never forget JICA and the people of Japan being so kind.

Pema Dorji from Bhutan

(Participant of Reinforcement of Meteorological Services Sep. 11-Dec. 18)



Mr. Pema Dorji and a Japanese visitor

Global Festa is the biggest international festival in Tokyo, which brings together all international communities living in JAPAN to exchange their cultural values and customs. It consists of various cultural shows such as dances and performances, displays of national costumes and also food stalls bringing cuisine from all over the world, which was a great attraction of the day.

The main organizations represented in this festival were those working with international communities such as JICA.



Participant Ms. Kishani Liyanage

It gave us a good opportunity to share and feel the differences of various cultural aspects worldwide and gain an insight into different countries. It gave us a lively experience to mix with people from different countries, discuss with them and learn about their cultures and countries. The stage performances from different countries were fascinating. In addition, there were stalls selling goods from mostly developing countries as a means of aid. For example, there were handicraft, clothing and jewelry representing the uniqueness of those countries.

I also got the opportunity to introduce my country with its most popular things at the JICA stage which was a great opportunity to represent my country. I am very grateful to JICA for giving me this opportunity. Moreover I think it is very interesting and useful to have such cultural festivals in order to develop improved understanding and cooperation among various global communities.

Kishani Wickramasinghe Hareendra LIYANAGE from Sri Lanka

(Ms. LIYANAGE is a Long-term Training Participant who studies at National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies August 2010-March 2012)



JICA participants waiting for their turn wearing their countries' flags

Participants Promote Their Home Countries' Tourism Resources (Tourism Promotion and Marketing Course)



An attractive helper from Peru's booth in her national costume

The JATA* World Travel Fair, held at Tokyo Big Site in Odaiba, Tokyo, is the largest travel-related events in Asia where you can obtain various kinds of information on overseas travel. This popular travel fair attracts more than 100,000 visitors every year. At the fair you can obtain the latest travel information in detail, which is difficult to get otherwise in Japan, from friendly staff visiting Japan for this event, or try some exotic food and drinks. JICA ran a booth at this big fair as a trial this year, and participants of "Tourism Promotion and Marketing" Course and JICA staff members together promoted tourism in respective countries.

In these years, tourism is attracting attention as an industry that generates large scale employment and provides various economic effects with relatively small investment, contributing in invigorating regional economies and reducing poverty. Therefore, many developing countries have recently been focusing on tourism as an important development issue. Not to mention the

serious need of tourism income in developing world, developed countries also aspire to promote tourism. Japan, for example, enacted the Tourism-based Country Promotion Basic Act in 2006 and is making efforts to increase the annual number of tourists visiting Japan to 10 million by 2010. It is therefore, quite easy to imagine that developing countries are even more eager to increase their revenue from greater number of tourists.

JICA Tokyo has long been implementing tourism-related training courses, and recently revised the programs to specifically focus on tourism promotion and marketing targeted at Japanese tourists. For this year's course, 12 participants from 11 countries, namely Botswana, Kenya, the Marshall Islands, Morocco, Mozambique, Palau, Peru, Sri Lanka, Uganda, Uruguay and Zimbabwe took part. Some countries are popular in Japan as a tourist site, while some are far from Japan and their names are not so well known to Japanese travel market. Participants consider the best way to attract Japanese tourists to their own country considering these different circumstances.



Participant explains Mozambique's attractions to visitors using maps and pamphlets he brought



Ugandan Participant brought a powerful help from Uganda's booth

The new training and dialog program provides many occasions to directly exchange opinions with various people involved in tourism promotion, not only those working for the supervisory authority of the tourism industry but also in those in local municipalities, the government tourist bureau, and tourism companies, because tourism promotion requires close cooperation between various stakeholders, including public offices and private companies. These occasions are intended to enable participants to gain a greater understanding of tourism policies and the tourism market in Japan. The training can be made even more practical through the presentations of each country in the JICA booth at the Travel Fair. Participants directly meet the Japanese consumers who will be their target, and make full use of their knowledge and marketing skills to exploit the tourism resources of their home country. They use the tourism brochure they have brought, and even ask for help from other booths from their country (if there are any), and exercise their wisdom to promote their home country to Japanese consumers.



Participant from Marshall Islands appeals to visitors with her national uniform

It was the first time for JICA to run a booth, and hearing the opinions of consumers directly at the Travel Fair should improve the quality of the training as the participants felt a real response to their entry to the Japanese market, becoming more and more serious during lectures thereafter. Although the decision to run a JICA booth at the fair was somewhat of a gamble, it turned out to be successful. Below are comments from participants who participated in the event.

The JATA Fair was an eye opener for many of us. It was where we were able to get a lot of information on the behavior of Japanese overseas travelers as well as the trend of the overseas market in the previous years. (Participant from Botswana)

It was a good experience, having direct contact with Japanese people, good knowledge concerning promotion activities in other countries. (Participant from Morocco)

We look forward to hearing the news of increase of Japanese tourist in these participants' countries.

*JATA = Japan Association of Travel Agents

Yuriko DOI, Industrial Development and Finance Division, JICA Tokyo

Ozone Layer Protection and Global Warming Countermeasures

- Measures to Reduce Controlled Substances under the Montreal and Kyoto Protocols -

Refrigerators and air-conditioners are the most commonly used appliances in our daily lives. We cool or freeze our foods and want to keep our homes cool too. However, the use of such equipment can attribute to a crisis known as global warming. As is widely known, man-made coolant gases, such as chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and hydrochlorofluorocarbons (HCFCs) used in refrigerators and air-conditioners are causing global warming and depletion of the ozone layers.



Demonstration of extracting CFC from a car air-conditioner.

The Montreal Protocol, amended in 2007, set the target year for developing countries to freeze the consumption and production of HCFCs by 2013, and complete the accelerated phase-out in 2030.

One participant describes the current situation that developing countries are facing: "Even after CFCs and other ozone depleting substances (ODS) are phased out, large stocks of equipment containing these substances, especially refrigerators and air-conditioners, continue to be used worldwide. When equipment with these materials reaches the end of its service life, it is critical that any remaining ODS contained in it be properly recovered for recycling, reclamation or destruction (technical term for chemical decomposition)."

We are delighted to welcome ozone experts from developing countries as participants of the course that lasts from January 17 to 28 and to offer them Japan's experiences and knowledge that we have accumulated over decades. The course is designed to showcase alternative and state-of-the-art technologies such as visits to home appliance recycling plants, observation of CFC destruction using cement kilns and technologies on CFC-free freezers etc. Course participants will attend a series of lectures on laws and regulations in Japan and alternative methods for the recovery and destruction of CFCs and HCFCs. We hope the training course will suggest countermeasures and solutions to achieve the phase-out goal in respective countries.



Participants observing chemical demonstration of handling ozone depleting substances.

Hisako UENO Industrial Development and Finance Division, JICA Tokyo

Japan's Policy on Ozone-depleting Substances

Following the decision made at the amendment of the Montreal Protocol in 2007 to accelerate the phase-out of HCFC (hydrochlorofluorocarbon), an ozone-depleting substance, developing countries are currently considering countermeasures to comply with the early stage of the phase-out, such as selecting alternative materials and technologies.

In addition to achieving the switch from HCFC and other substances a number of times, Japan has been engaged actively in the implementation of HFC discharge control measures as a signatory to the Kyoto Protocol, as the country has abundant knowledge and advanced environmental/energy-conservation technology.

Under such a circumstance, if the advanced experience/alternative technology of Japan can be utilized in the HCFC countermeasures of developing countries, not only can Japan make international contributions as a part of the support for developing countries, which is an obligation set forth in the Montreal Protocol, it will also be consistent with the industrial policy of Japan that aims to promote green innovation with visions of overseas business opportunities. Therefore, it is expected that both Japan and developing countries establish a win-win situation through this training.



Hiromi KAWAHARA

Assistant Director, Ozone Layer Policy Office,
Chemical Management Policy Division, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry

"Capacity Development for Adaptation to Climate Change Climate Modeling and Analysis" Course



A participant makes presentation on his country's climate

Global warming is making abnormal weather events, such as heat waves and massive cyclones, happen more frequently. What kind of impact does such abnormal weather have on water resources, food, healthcare and ecosystems, which are very relevant to our daily lives? What kind of preparations can we make to let us cope with them?

This is a three-year course. Practical training on climate change forecasting has been implemented at the Meteorological Research Institute of Japan Meteorological Agency, over the past two years. This training started with the meteorological data of various countries being prepared, and progressed to the stage of forecasting and analyzing the climate change expected in the future in each of such countries, by using the world's highest resolution climate change forecast data, obtained from prepared data and the "Earth Simulator," which Japan boasts is one of the world's most advanced systems.

In this third and final year of the course, we will evaluate the impact of climate change in detail based on the results of the analysis. Droughts and floods, which are among the impacts of global warming and seriously harm people's lives and the economy, may be caused by changes in precipitation patterns. Therefore, we will focus especially on floods, and by obtaining support from the International Centre for Water Hazard and Risk Management (ICHAHM), we will aim to understand the regional impacts of climate change and learn what is necessary to cope with such impacts.

Although climate change involves many uncertainties and it is difficult to prepare for local disasters, damage can be minimized if adequate countermeasures are taken. This course contributes to the establishment of climate change countermeasures in the participants' countries, namely Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh,



Japanese experts on climate change collect meteorological information in Bangkok, Thailand

the Philippines and Vietnam.

Sanae YOSHIDA
Economic
Infrastructure
Development and
Environment
Division, JICA Tokyo

ICHAHM's Activities for Disaster and Risk Management

For the Region-Focused Training on "Capacity Development for Adaptation to Climate Change - Climate Modeling and Analysis", JICA is providing a Training and Dialog Program in close coordination with the Japan Meteorological Agency, and with ICHARM, the International Center for Water Hazard and Risk Management. Based on the Japanese Government's proposal to establish an international center for water-related hazards, ICHARM was established as an international organization in 2006 within the Japanese Government's Public Works Research Institute under the auspices of UNESCO and in cooperation with the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. ICHARM aims to help prevent and mitigate water-related disasters in the world. Initial efforts are focused on flood-related disaster management, or excessive water issues, to functioning as the a Global Center of Excellence to provide localities, nations, regions and the world with the best practicable strategies as well as assistance for implementing them.

Message from ICHARM

For this Training and Dialog Program, we have prepared not only seminars on the latest knowledge of climate change, but also forecast calculation drills of flooding under climate change using an Integrated Flood Analysis System (IFAS), which we have developed and are widely distributing, and visits to the flood control sites coping with climate change. Through these contents, we are planning a more practical program to meet the demands of each participant and enhance his/her ability to assess the influence of climate change in the respective country, and will continue to make all possible efforts reflecting this purpose.



**Your
"Recommendation"**

The JICA Tokyo Information Desk has set up a bulletin board to share useful information on leisure activities and daily lives among JICA Program Participants. To provide the participants with all the information required, we need your feedback information to be shared among the other participants.

With a venue for sharing such information, you can enjoy your leisure more meaningfully, hence we decided to place a bulletin board at the Communication Plaza. Here's how to use it: Let's suppose you went to Tokyo Disney Land and in this case, if you were satisfied, please note down your comment and stick it on the board. It helps those who are wondering where to go on weekends. If you went to a nice halal restaurant, place your remark about the food, location and its services on the board, and it will be very useful information for the Muslim participants. Also, if you want to go out in the weekend and are looking for someone to accompany you, you can place a message on the board to seek company.

There will be many ways to use this board. We are hoping that doing so makes your life in Tokyo more enjoyable one.



Akira NAKASHIMA,
JICA Tokyo Information Desk Clerk

HIRAYAMA Ikuo and the Preservation of Buddhist Heritage

仏教伝来の道 平山郁夫と文化財保護

A year has gone by since the passing of the master of Japanese painting HIRAYAMA Ikuo. As well as being the most popular Japanese painter, HIRAYAMA was also well known as an educator (serving twice as President of Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music) and leading activist in the preservation of cultural heritage. This special exhibit honors HIRAYAMA's outstanding efforts of preservation and seeks to renew awareness of the values of cultural heritage. Hirayama contributed especially to the preservation of Buddhist heritage in the 'Silk Road', or the area between China and Western Asia, hence this exhibit highlights Hirayama's works in this area most dear to him.

青銅像頭部6〜7世紀
中国・クチャムトラ千仏洞出土
大谷隆探検隊得來 山梨・
平山郁夫シルクロード美術館蔵

平山郁夫「大唐西域壁画」より「ナランダの月」の一角
2000年奈良・東大寺蔵

Place: Heiseikan, Tokyo National Museum (国立博物館平成館)

(A 10-minute walk from Ueno Station on JR and Tokyo Metro Lines)

Date: Jan 18 (Tue.)-Mar 6 (Sun.)

Time: 9:30-17:00 (Last entry 16:30)

Admission: ¥1,500

LE SURREALISME: Exposition organisée par le Centre Pompidou à partir de sa collection

シュルレアリスム展

Are you familiar with surrealism? Can you explain the meaning of these metaphysical paintings? Maybe not so much. Even so, you will surely enjoy the world of surrealism by visiting this special exhibition which features 170 pieces including paintings, sculptures, objets d'art, sketches, photographs and movie films. This ambitious exposition explores the entire aspects and history of surrealism, the largest artistic movement in 20th Century.

ルネ・マグリット
「秘密の分身」1927年
油絵カンヴァス114×162cm
© ADAGP, Paris & SPDA,
Tokyo, 2010
© Collection Centre Pompidou,
Dist. RMN/ Droits réservés

Place: The National Art Center, Tokyo (国立新美術館)

1st Floor Exhibition Room

(Exit 6 of Nogizaka Station on the Tokyo Metro Chiyoda Line, A 5-minutes walk from Roppongi Station on the Toei Oedo Subway Line and Tokyo Metro Hibiya Line)

Date: Feb 9 (Wed.)-May 9 (Mon.)

Closed on Tuesdays, except May 3

Time: 10:00-18:00 (until 20:00 on Fridays)

Admission: ¥1,500