



From Japan to the Northwest

News From the Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle



Our monthly newsletter, "From Japan to the Northwest," is intended to share important and interesting information related to Japan, our region, and the Consulate's activities.

You can find [past issues of the newsletter here](#).



Credit: Japan National Tourism Organization

Welcome to the December 2024 edition of From Japan to the Northwest!

In this edition, we will cover the 73rd Gender Equality Council Meeting, the designation of the sake brewing process utilizing Koji cultures as a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage of humanity, and a special video on Christmas in Japan made by us at the Consulate.

We will continue a **once-a-month publication schedule** to bring you the most important news from Japan and our region. Please be sure to **follow us on social media by clicking the icons below** for more frequent updates on local Japan-related events and the Consulate's activities.



1. Prime Minister Meetings

G7 Leaders' Video Conference



Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On December 13, 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba attended the G7 Leaders' Video Conference at the Prime Minister's Official Residence.

Council for Gender Equality



Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On December 13th, 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba attended the 73rd Gender Equality Council Meeting at the Prime Minister's Office.

At the meeting, discussions were held on the formulation of the 6th Basic Plan for Gender Equality, among other issues.

Based on those discussions, the Prime Minister made the following statement:

"We will begin today to consider a new Basic Plan for Gender Equality and a Women's Version of the Bold 2025 (Priority Policies for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality 2025).

"Women's empowerment and gender equality are essential elements for the sustainable development of our country's economy and society, as well as for the realization of a society where all people can find meaning in their lives and where diversity is respected.

"In order to dramatically change the way decisions are made, the government and private sector will work together to achieve the goal of having women participate in decision-making in all organizations in society, and will set guidelines and take systematic action to achieve this. The correction of the wage gap between men and women remains an urgent issue. We will lead a national debate on how to encourage more women to continue to be active in society for longer, and will work to achieve institutional reform.

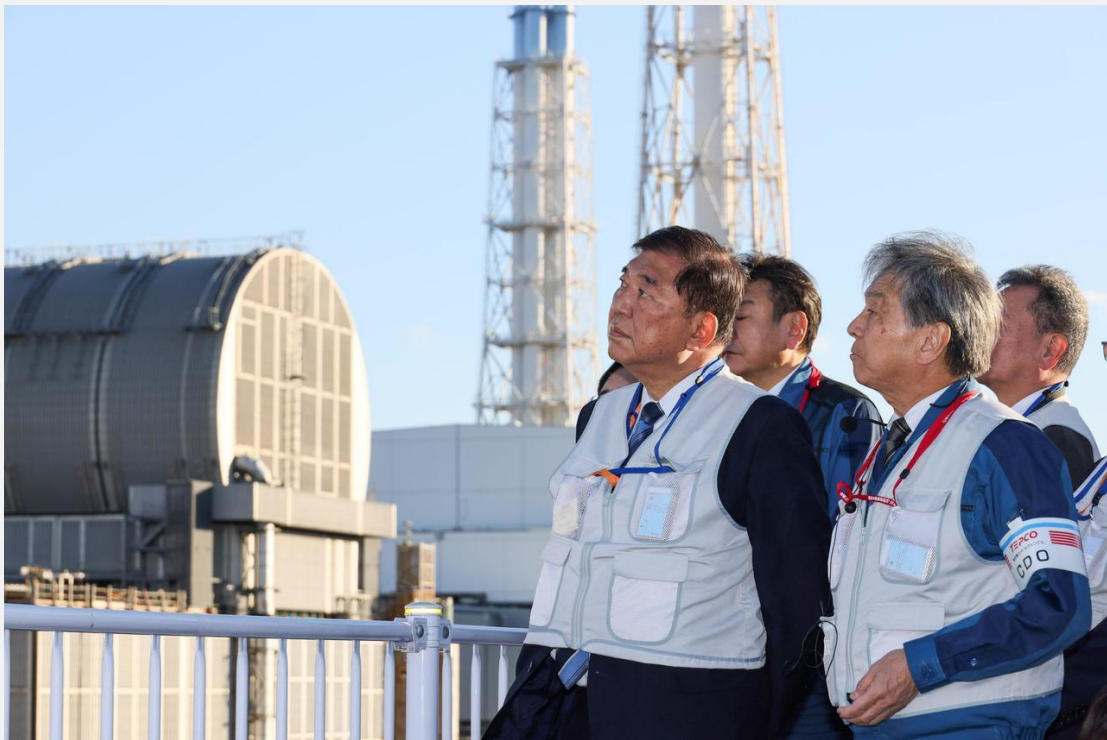
"The issues we need to address to achieve this are wide-ranging. We need to further strengthen our efforts in various fields, including increasing the participation of women in decision-making positions in all fields, creating an environment where everyone can work according to their wishes, creating communities where women are chosen and can play an active role, and realizing a society where individual dignity is protected and safety and security are ensured.

"I would like to ask Minister Mihara to lead the way in considering effective measures that should be taken in the immediate future to address these issues, and to compile the "Women's Version of the Bold Policy 2025" by June next year.

"I would also like to ask you to compile the Basic Plan for Gender Equality for the next five years by December next year. Thank you very much."

2. Prime Minister Ishiba Visits Fukushima

[Visit to Fukushima Prefecture](#)



Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On December 14, 2024, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Fukushima Prefecture.

Prime Minister Ishiba visited a temporary storage site for removed soil in Futaba Town, followed by a visit to houses in the Restricted Areas of the same town.

In the afternoon, Prime Minister Ishiba visited a company that manufactures twisted threads and sells towels, which opened an office in Futaba Town last year, followed by a site visit of a soil storage facility and a demonstration site for road embankment at the Interim Storage Facility in Okuma Town. After observing the exterior of the reactor buildings of Units 1 to 4 of Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station in the same town, the Prime Minister gave encouragement to staff members at the Seismic Isolated Building. The Prime Minister then observed the exterior of the reactor buildings of Units 5 and 6 and the ocean discharge facility of ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System)-treated water. Finally, he spoke to the press regarding the visit to Fukushima Prefecture and other matters.

3. Sake-making Receives International Recognition

[Message from Prime Minister Ishiba regarding the Occasion of the Inscription of “Traditional Knowledge and Skills of Sake-making with Koji Mold in Japan” on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity](#)

I am truly delighted that Japan's "traditional knowledge and skills of sake-making" has been inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all those involved who have dedicated themselves to preserving and passing on this tradition.

We boast to the rest of the world about this "traditional sake-making," a craft developed by chief sake makers, called toji, and brewery workers, called kurabito. They have refined their techniques through experience by employing koji mold and adapting to the diverse climates and natural environments across Japan.

We are committed to protecting and passing on to future generations this traditional craft, which has been handed down throughout Japan. We will also seize this inscription as an opportunity to promote awareness of "traditional sake-making" both at home and abroad, and to contribute to regional revitalization and further global outreach by supporting the efforts of all those involved in this industry.

ISHIBA Shigeru
Prime Minister

4. Consulate News & Activities

Merry Christmas from the Consulate!

We at the Consulate just put out a new YouTube video on the ways that Japanese people celebrate Christmas. From romantic date nights to takeout fried-chicken feasts, see how the Japanese Christmas celebration takes a fun and festive twist.

[Check out our video on YouTube!](#)

[**6th SEIJIN-shiki USA**](#)

Register Now & Save Your Spot!



COMING OF AGE
成人式
USA
6th

SEIJIN-shiki USA
Embrace Your Journey Ahead

Celebrate your coming-of age together!
Welcoming anyone born between January 2003 and March 2005
Free Event • Registration required

 **January 19, 2025**
 **2:00pm door opens**
3:00pm program starts
 **Meydenbauer Center Theatre**
11100 NE 6th St. Bellevue, WA 98004

Save your spot today!



Social Media
@seijinUSA



Visit seijinusa.org or email contact@seijinusa.org for more information

Presented by  

Credit: Seijin-Shiki USA

Experience Japanese culture and celebrate your coming-of-age with your fellow SEIJINs in Bellevue, WA! 6th SEIJIN-shiki USA welcomes anyone whose birthday falls between January 2003 and March 2005. Like this year, the ceremony will include an onstage appearance by Deputy Consul General Junichi Sumi! Click the link above or scan the QR code for more information.

Thank you for reading the final issue of "From Japan to the Northwest" for 2024! We at the Consulate wish you a happy new year and look forward to seeing you in 2025!

Sincerely,
Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

View [past issues of "From Japan to the Northwest" here.](#)

Visit the Consulate's homepage here:

- [Homepage \(English・英語\)](#)
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And be sure to follow us on social media using the icons below!

