



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: Hyogo Official Tourism Navigation

Welcome to the March 2025 edition of From Japan to the Northwest!

In this edition, we cover the anniversary of the Fukushima Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster, Prime Minister Ishiba's statement regarding International Women's Day on March 8, and a meeting Prime Minister Ishiba attended on promoting Japan as a tourism-oriented country. Locally, we at the Consulate attended Emerald City Comic Con and celebrated the winners of the Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl and the 50th anniversary of ties between Naha High School in Okinawa, Japan, and Nathan Hale High School in Seattle.

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. Anniversary of the Fukushima Earthquake Disaster

[Visit to Fukushima Prefecture](#)



Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On March 11, 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited Fukushima Prefecture.

The Prime Minister visited the R&D facility of a robotics manufacturing company in Fukushima City, followed by a small group talk with business leaders engaged in driving innovation creation.

Afterwards, the Prime Minister attended the Memorial Ceremony Marking the 14th Anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake and delivered a memorial address and spoke to the press regarding his visit to Fukushima Prefecture and other matters.

In his commemorative address, Prime Minister Ishiba reflected on the 14 years since the devastating earthquake, tsunamis, and the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident. He expressed deep sympathy for those who lost loved ones and those still living as evacuees, particularly in Fukushima. Ishiba acknowledged the steady progress in reconstruction, including the lifting of evacuation orders and improvements in living conditions, though he emphasized that long-term support is needed for full recovery.

He highlighted the ongoing decommissioning of the Fukushima Daiichi plant, efforts to revitalize the region's industries, and initiatives like the Fukushima Innovation

Coast Framework. Ishiba stressed the importance of the upcoming "Second Reconstruction and Revitalization Period" in addressing further challenges. He underscored the lessons learned from the disaster, which will guide future disaster preparedness and response. He concluded with prayers for the departed, wishing for peace and tranquility for those who were affected.

2. International Women's Day

Video Message from Prime Minister ISHIBA Shigeru on International Women's Day

The following is a summary of the remarks Prime Minister Ishiba gave on March 8 for the occasion of International Women's Day.

Prime Minister Ishiba began by expressing respect and gratitude to those working for women's empowerment and gender equality globally. He emphasized that women's empowerment is crucial for a society where all individuals feel valued and for the sustainable development of Japan's economy and society.

Prime Minister Ishiba outlined his administration's "Regional Revitalization 2.0" initiative, which focuses on creating regional areas attractive to young people and women, encouraging new opportunities and dreams. He committed to eliminating unconscious bias, addressing wage disparities between men and women, and promoting workplace policies like short-time regular employment to improve work-life balance. Additionally, he pledged to combat the "L-shaped curve" in female employment after childbirth and encourage men to take childcare leave. He concluded by reaffirming his dedication to ensuring that all women can freely pursue their chosen paths.

3. Promoting Tourism in Japan

Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country



Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On March 18, 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba held the 26th meeting of the Ministerial Council on the Promotion of Japan as a Tourism-Oriented Country at the Prime Minister's Office.

At the meeting, the participants engaged in discussions on the current situation surrounding tourism and implementation status of the current basic plan.

After the discussion, the Prime Minister discussed Japan's tourism growth, highlighting that in 2024, there were about 37 million foreign visitors who spent around 8.1 trillion yen. He emphasized the importance of spreading the benefits of tourism across Japan, particularly in regional areas, as part of "Regional Revitalization 2.0," which helps empower young people and women.

He outlined three key points for advancing tourism:

Promotion of Regional Attractions: Efforts should focus on boosting the appeal of regional tourism, improving transportation networks, and introducing a Japanese version of ESTA to facilitate travel. The Osaka Kansai Expo is seen as an opportunity to attract visitors to regional areas.

Promotion of Sustainable Tourism: Regional areas should benefit from increased tourism, with a focus on smart tourism that adds high value, generates profit, and addresses overtourism through the expansion of successful case studies.

Formulation of the 5th Tourism Nation Promotion Basic Plan: A new plan should be created by the end of fiscal year 2025 to reach the goal of 60 million visitors and 15

trillion yen in spending by 2030. This plan will aim to further develop Japan as a tourism-oriented country.

The Prime Minister urged ministers to collaborate and drive the tourism strategy forward with both public and private sector efforts.

4. The Los Angeles Dodgers Visit Tokyo

[Courtesy Call from the Los Angeles Dodgers](#)



Credit: Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On March 14, 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba received a courtesy call from Mr. Mark Walter, Owner and Chairman of the Los Angeles Dodgers, and Mr. SASAKI Roki, a player of the team, at the Prime Minister's Office.

5. Consulate News & Activities

[Emerald City Comic Con](#)



Credit: Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

From March 6 to 9, the CGJ-SEA Culture Crew brought Japanese culture to Emerald City Comic Con, answering questions and sharing insights about Japanese traditions, history, and travel!

Check out the highlights from this fun and engaging weekend!

<https://youtu.be/oRI7OdNJUOs>

2025 Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl



Credit: Yoshiko Wong Photography

On March 15, the Pacific Northwest Japan Bowl ([Japan-America Society of Oregon JASO](#)) was held at [Clark College -- Vancouver, Washington](#). Over 100 high school students put their knowledge of the Japanese language and culture to the test in a fierce competition that filled the venue with excitement. Deputy Consul General Sumi gave opening remarks at the event and served as one of the celebrity judges for the competition. Consulate staff also attended and ran a booth sharing information about the JET Program, scholarships, and travel to Japan.

Level 3 Winner: Westview High School

Level 4 Winner: Sunset High School

Both teams will advance to the National Japan Bowl to be held in Washington, D.C. on April 4 and 5! Thank you all for your hard work and support!

[50th Anniversary of Naha High School and Nathan Hale High School's Exchange Program](#)



Credit: Students Zach Lee and Scout Hoots - Nathan Hale High School

On February 26, a ceremony was held at Nathan Hale High School in Seattle to celebrate 50 years of a student exchange program with Naha High School in Okinawa, Japan.

Since 1975, student representatives from each school have visited each other every year to experience homestays and school life in their counterpart's country. Nathan Hale student representatives are scheduled to visit Naha High School in July.

The ceremony featured performances by Nathan Hale and Naha students. Remarks were given by Principal Jolene Grimes Edwards, Mayor Bruce Harrell, Consul General Iyori, and Seattle Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Brent Jones.

Naha High School even has a "Seattle Club" of program alumni who still get together to this day!

Thank you so much to both schools for the wonderful exchange!

Thank you for reading this issue of "From Japan to the Northwest." That's all for this month's newsletter. Until next month!

Sincerely,
Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle

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

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