

Contents

(1) Event Report

- International Education Seminar
~ Introduction to International Understanding Education Foreign Supporters Programme ~

(2) Notices

- Seeking residents at Sakai International Hall!
- Seeking Short-Notice Language Volunteers

(3) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

- Changes to Extension of Period of Stay Application Process

(4) Osaka International Club News

- Ando Program/ Osaka Invitational Program for Short-Term Overseas Trainees in Architecture and Arts 2008 Program Participant, Surya Wirawan (Indonesia)

(5) OFIX Network

- Royal Thai Consulate-General, Osaka

(6) OFIX Coordinator for International Relations Report

- Summer in Japan

(1) Event Report

International Education Seminar



This event was held in conjunction with JICA on the 30th-31st July to promote the development of international understanding education in Osaka Prefecture. The seminar consisted of numerous workshops providing

information and examples of international education programs at schools.

On the 31st July OFIX held a seminar in collaboration with the Kawachinagano Education Media Centre in

~ Introduction to International Understanding Education Foreign Supporters Programme ~

The International Understanding Education Program is one of the key programs run by the Osaka Foundation of International Exchange (OFIX). The aim of the program is to promote international exchange and understanding through school visits by our OFIX International Understanding Education Foreign Supporters, where they introduce their country and its culture to the school kids in Japanese.

■ Eligible Organizations

- Any public/private schools in Osaka Prefecture, including elementary, junior high and high schools established under/based on the School Education Law
- International exchange organizations based in Osaka Prefecture



which we promoted our International Understanding Education Foreign Supporters Programme (see below), and also connected with Australia and Ethiopia via the internet to promote our distance learning lessons.

At the end of the seminar we held a workshop in which the teachers taking part split up into groups and made introductory posters for Japan (Osaka), France, China, and the UK. After this a member from each group presented their poster. We hope that the seminar was of interest to all participants, and that things learnt will be utilized by the teachers at their home schools.

■ Who are the Supporters?

The OFIX International Understanding Education Foreign Supporters are foreign residents (international students etc), living in Osaka registered with us to visit schools and introduce their country's culture, history, music, traditions, and games in Japanese.

■ How much will it cost?

At the present time OFIX pays all travel expenses incurred by the Supporters, so there is no cost involved for the schools.

< Applications and Enquiries >

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TEL: 06-6966-2400 FAX: 06-6966-2401

E-mail: info@ofix.or.jp

(2) Notices

Seeking residents at Sakai International Hall!

The Orion International House is a hall of residence for international students in Osaka. From October we will have around 10 male rooms available to rent. All rooms are for single occupancy and come fitted with bath, toilet, air-conditioner, fridge, desk, bed etc.

A friendly caretaker is on hand to ensure students settle into life in the house. There are regular events at the house, including exchange events with local residents.

Monthly rent: 26,000 Yen (no deposit, includes all amenities).

Those interested please get in touch with the international student office at your university. Further information is also available on the OFIX website.

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/shien/index.html>



Seeking Short-Notice Language Volunteers

OFIX began recruiting these volunteers last August, who act as interpreters and translators able to volunteer in emergency situations at a moments notice. We are now looking to recruit extra volunteers to serve in this way. All those that sign up will be automatically registered as standard OFIX language volunteers also.

In the past year the volunteers have been active helping to translate emergency information on the Osaka Prefectural Government homepage, and on interpreting assignments for foreign residents.

We are now looking for Japanese or foreign residents with any of the following language

skills.

Languages: Spanish, Filipino, Indonesian, Russian, German, Vietnamese, other minor languages.

Further details can be found on the OFIX website. (Please be sure to attach a photo with your application)

http://www.ofix.or.jp/ouboyoushi_20100329.pdf

(Application form)

http://www.ofix.or.jp/bosyuyoukou_20100329.pdf

(Further particulars)

(3) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

Changes to Extension of Period of Stay Application Process

For many foreign residents in Japan the period of stay granted is either 1 year or 3 years. Those wishing to extend their period of stay are required to apply to do so. Until recently there were no official stipulations where the extension of period stay was concerned, however this July saw the introduction of clear regulations.

Those who file an application by their current expiration date, but do not receive an official decision on the application by this expiration date, are allowed to stay in Japan with the same status of residence until the day the decision is made for the application, or for two months after the expiration date, whichever comes earlier. Those wishing to re-enter Japan during this period are able to apply for a new Re-Entry Permit to do so. "Permission to Engage in Activities other than

that Permitted under the Status of Residence Previously Granted" remains valid during this period. Furthermore, from July of this year applications for extension of period of stay can be made 3 months prior to the expiration date.

Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

(Mon ~ Fri, not open on weekends and national holidays)

Tel (direct line) 06-6941-2297 (Hours 9:00 ~ 17:45)

Languages: English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, Filipino, Thai, Japanese

(3) Osaka Information Service for Foreign Residents

Ando Program/ Osaka Invitational Program for Short-Term Overseas Trainees in Architecture and Arts 2008 Program Participant, Surya Wirawan (Indonesia)

Hello everyone, *Hajimemashite!* I am Mohamad Surya Wirawan from Indonesia. I was a student of architecture when I went to Japan for the Ando Program, and currently I am a junior engineer working for the architecture department at the Indonesia branch office of Takenaka Corporation, a Japanese architectural firm.

Every year Tadao Ando, one of the most famous architects in Japan, invites students from around Asia to take part in the Ando Program. OFIX acts as coordinator for this program, and in 2008 I was selected along with 9 other trainees to take part. It was a wonderful chance not only to learn about Japan, but to learn about the home countries of the other participants too. I felt so lucky to be part of the program.

To improve our design skills, each trainee took part in an internship at a host company. I was placed in Takenaka Corporation, along with two other trainees from Thailand and South Korea. We were taken to several construction sites, and learnt about construction methods and processes. Taking part in the program taught me how developed Japan is, particularly in the fields of architectural design and construction.

After I graduated from university, I found a job working for the Indonesia branch office of Takenaka Corporation. In the office we focus on

factory building because a lot of Japanese companies invest financial capital to produce goods for local consumption, or to export to other countries. This area was new for me, because during my study at university I mostly focused on residential and commercial buildings.

As a junior architectural engineer, I am responsible for mostly small projects because I am still a beginner. However I always do my best to learn as much as possible. The hardest thing is delivering projects to suit our clients needs and requirements, whilst maintaining our own design principles and aesthetic considerations.

Japanese people are more disciplined and hard working than Indonesian workers. However, they are open to new ideas, and very often inspire me by offering new methods to solve problems that occur in the design process. Even now some of my designs are influenced by what I learnt on the Ando Program. My time on the Ando Program is therefore still of great importance to me, and has greatly influenced my current working life. I hope in the future to focus on the design of earthquake resistant buildings, an area in which Japan is far ahead of Indonesia.

Thanks to the Ando Program I have this connection with Japan, which I hope to continue in the future. Domo arigato gozaimasu.

(5) OFIX Network

Royal Thai Consulate-General, Osaka

The Royal Thai Consulate-General in Osaka was established in 1989. Its jurisdiction covers 7 prefectures in Kansai region, namely Osaka, Kyoto, Nara, Hyogo, Wakayama, Shiga and Mie. The current Consul-General is Mr. Manopchai Vongphakdi.

Since its establishment, the Royal Thai Consulate-General in Osaka has been providing assistance to both Thai citizens living in the Kansai area and other parts of Japan near Kansai and also the Japanese peoples and foreign national living in Japan who wish to travel to or trade with Thailand. The office has been also promoting friendly relations and cooperation between Thailand and the Kansai region.

Over the past years we continue to hold various events in and around Osaka, and nearby cities. We have also organized outreach-programs to various cities where there are a number of Thai citizens.

Upcoming Events in September for Thai Citizens

1. Mobile Consular Service in Wakayama

This service is provided for Thai citizens living in Wakayama and its vicinity. Service includes family related matters, passport, registration for the overseas election, and counseling on legal matters. On average, we organize the mobile

consular service 4 times a year in the areas where Thai citizens are quite concentrated.

Date: 12 September 2010 Time: 10.00-15.00

Venue: Wakayama City Labor Center

2. Thai Volunteers Network Project : Quality of Life

We stress the importance of Thai community in Japan. We view that the Thai volunteers network is an effective means when assistance to Thai citizens in each area during the emergency is needed. The project is aimed to develop the Thai volunteers' knowledge, skills, and technique on various issues relating to everyday life. They will also learn how to live a happy life and how to properly assist others. This year invited speakers include Phra Maha Sompong Talaputto, a famous preacher monk and the creator of "Dhamma Delivery". All Thai citizens who are interested in the activity are also welcome to participate.

Date: 24-26 September 2010

Venue: Kyoto, Osaka, Wakayama

For further details, please see our website

Contact Information

Address: 4F, Bangkok Bank Building, 1-9-16 Kyutaro-machi, Chuo-ku, Osaka-shi, 541-0056

Tel: 06-6262-9226/9227 **Fax:** 06-6262-9228

Website: www.thaiconsulate.jp



Summer in Japan

Hi everyone, Richard here again.

This month I thought I'd write a bit about summer in Japan. Before coming to Japan summer was something I looked forward to every year, full of visits to the beach, barbecues in the garden, football in the park, bucketloads of ice cream and lots of other fun things! However, that all changed the first time I experienced summer Japan. With temperatures constantly well over 30 degrees for the best part of 3 months, and humidity like you wouldn't believe, it is just too hot for me! My very first memory of Japan is arriving as a 20 year old exchange student at Kansai Airport, and upon leaving the building it feeling like I had just stepped into a boiling hot oven!

I am used to the pretty much non-existent summers in the UK, where most years all we get is at most a week or so of hot weather, followed by dull grey skies, rain, and temperatures in the early 20s. That sounds like my idea of heaven right about now! The British like to complain about the lack of a proper summer in the UK, but believe me, one day spent in Japan in mid-August and they'd be on the first plane home!

Having said all this, forgetting the oppressive heat for a moment, there are lots of fun things that go on in Japan over the summer. The huge firework events for starters are great fun, with everyone going along in their yukata's (casual summer kimono), enjoying a few beers with friends, and some tasty food from the huge variety of stalls available. Perhaps the most famous festival is the Tenjin Matsuri Festival. A massive festival held along the river in central Osaka every July. Hundred of floats sail along the river, with fireworks, music, and food stalls dotted along the river banks.

In mid-August there is the Obon holiday, which sees people returning back to their hometowns, spending time with their families, and visiting the

graves of their ancestors. Throughout August there are also Bon-Odori festivals, which are traditional dance festivals held all over Japan during August. Each region has a different dance, very often with different music too. The main Bon-Odori in Osaka is called the Kawachi-ondo, originating from Yao.

Another interesting aspect of summer in Japan is the tradition of ghost story telling. It is thought that scary stories help you to cool down, making the humid weather that bit more bearable! Another thing which is supposed to cool you down and give you an extra energy boost for the summer is eel. Personally I'd rather have a nice big tub of ice-cream! Oh, and talk of summer in Japan is not complete without a brief mention of the cicada's and their incessant buzzing! There is no need for an alarm clock when the cicada's are about!

It is interesting that certain aspects of summer in Japan are more associated with winter in the UK. This includes fireworks, as well as ghost story telling. It gets dark at around 5pm in the UK during the winter, making it the perfect time for these kinds of activities. There are no really huge summer festivals in the UK, but depending on the region there'll be summer fairs, huge music festivals, sports events, and family trips to the seaside.

For me though, summer is the season to stay at home in front of the air conditioner, and wait for the coming of autumn! I suppose the one good thing about summer being such torture, is the fact that it makes one appreciate the other seasons all the more!

**Osaka Prefectural Government E-Newsletter****「GEO (Global E-net Osaka)」**

Full of information about events in Osaka, and fun facts about the area.

<http://www.pref.osaka.jp/kokusai/geo/index.html>

Other Notices

- Donations for Osaka exhibition at 2010 Shanghai Expo: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/news.html#syanghai>
- Information for foreign residents in Osaka <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/life/index.html>

Comments and suggestions for OFIX News: info@ofix.or.jp

Osaka International Club Reports: clubnews@ofix.or.jp

Register to OFIX News: <http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/index.html>

OFIX News Back Numbers:

<http://www.ofix.or.jp/english/mail/backnumber.html>

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