



JAPAN FRESH NEWS

No. 17 (August 2015)

by the Embassy of Japan in Slovenia

(*Tōrō Nagashi: see at the end)

~ fresh news, recent & future events and useful sites ~

(This newsletter will be issued every end of month, and if your colleagues/friends want to receive this, please tell them to send their email address to: info@s2.mofa.go.jp.)

(If your institution/group is organizing a Japan-related event, we welcome to include it in this newsletter! Please send your info to matej.crnjavic@s2.mofa.go.jp.)



- * **"Sites of Japan's Meiji industrial revolution" listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List** (Sec. III)
- * **Japanese cherry tree in Bled** (Sec. I)
- * **Panasonic and Gorenje** to expand Strategic Business Alliance (Sec. II)
- * **Concert (Japan, Israel)** at the Old Square in Ljubljana (Sec. IV)
- * **International swordsmanship's seminar** in Griže between 8 and 12 August (Sec. IV)
- * **Asian Culinary Day** at Lake Zbilje (Sec. IV)



I. Fresh/important news

~ Japanese cherry tree planted by Prince and Princess Akishino in Bled ~

Do you know that there is a Japanese cherry tree planted by Their Imperial Highness Prince and Princess Akishino in front of Bled City hall? This commemorative Japanese cherry tree was planted by Their Imperial Highnesses on 29 June 2013 on the occasion of their visit to Slovenia. On 22 July 2015, Ambassador Jomori and Mr. Janez Fajfar, Mayor of Bled, renewed the commemorative plate next to the cherry tree. Next time when you go to Bled, please remember to visit this memorial cherry tree! [Details](#)

~ Keynote Speech by FM Kishida at the UN University ~

On June 20, 2015, a "High-Level Seminar on Peacebuilding, National Reconciliation and Democratization in Asia" was held at the United Nations University in Tokyo, where FM Kishida made a keynote speech titled "A Peace-Loving Nation Walking with Asia". You can find the full speech [here](#).

~ The Seventh Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting ~

On July 4, 2015, the Seventh Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting was held in Tokyo. The Summit was chaired by PM Abe and attended by heads from Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam. At the Summit, the "New Tokyo Strategy 2015 for Mekong-Japan Cooperation," a strategy for Mekong-Japan cooperation over the next three years, was adopted. [Details](#)

II. Economic/Business News

~ Panasonic and Gorenje to expand Strategic Business Alliance ~

On July 5, Panasonic Corporation and Gorenje Group signed an amendment to the Strategic Alliance Agreement, with which they have agreed to expand their strategic business cooperation to several new business segments, in addition to the already existing areas of cooperation. Since the signing of Strategic Business agreement between Panasonic and Gorenje in 2013, both companies have been steadily strengthening their cooperation. [Details](#)

~ Updates on recovery operations at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station ~

Providing information on the current situation of Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station to the international society in a transparent and accurate manner is one of the most important duties of the Government of Japan. More details [here](#).

~ Update on Japan's Response to the Ebola Outbreak in West Africa ~

The current Ebola outbreak might finally be ending, due partly to the support from the international community, including Japan. However, considering that some new cases are still being confirmed, Japan is determined to continue providing support with a view to achieving a zero case. [Details](#)

III. Recent events and other

~ "Sites of Japan's Meiji industrial revolution" listed on UNESCO's World Heritage List ~

The 39th Session of the World Heritage Committee which was held on 8 July 2015 in Bonn, Germany, adopted the inscription of the "Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining" to the 2015 UNESCO's World Heritage List. This highly valued property comprises a series of industrial heritage sites that represent the first successful industrialization between the 1850's and 1910 in the non-Western world. For more info on these [Sites](#), check the [Foreign Ministry's website](#).

~ "Tokyo Summer Discoveries 2015" published by Kateigaho International ~

The Japanese publishing company, [Kateigaho International](#), issued a special edition focused on Tokyo that shows a various aspect of Tokyo Life, such as Japanese summer food, hand crafts, entertainment and tourism in Tokyo. This magazine is now available at the Embassy.

IV. Future events

~ Concert: The Yabuno Ettun Project (Japan, Israel) ~

On **Friday, 14 August at 20:30** stop by at the **Old Square in Ljubljana** for the Yabuno Ettun Project concert, a collaboration of Japanese pianist Haruka Yabuno and Israeli double bass player Ehud Ettun. The duo's musical repertoire is very extensive, making each concert a unique experience; organized by Imago Sloveniae as part of the International Festival Summer in Old Ljubljana Town, with support of the Embassy of Japan. **Entrance is free of charge.** [Details](#).

~ International Hyoho Niten Ichi Ryu Workshop Slovenia 2015 ~

Between **8 and 12 August**, the Kensei club Griže is hosting the International Hyoho Niten Ichi Ryu Workshop Slovenia 2015. Arriving in Slovenia for the first time will be sensei Takanorui Kajiya (12th Soke) and sensei Takehisa Shuri. [Details](#).

~ Asian Culinary Day at Lake Zbilje ~

Touhou Association and KD Zbilje are kindly inviting to the Asian culinary day, dedicated to the introduction and promotion of Asian cuisines. Join the event and discover that Asian food is more than just sushi, sweet and sour chicken, and rice! Free tastings, entertainment program on stage, animation for children and much more is waiting for you at **lake Zbilje** on **23 August 2015, starting at 10:00**. The event is organized with support of the Embassy of Japan. Entrance is free of charge. [Details](#).

For more information about Japan, please visit these websites:

- ①. Prime Minister Abe's government policies
 1. [Abenomics](#) (Prime Minister Abe's economic policy)
 2. [Proactive Contribution to Peace](#)
 3. [A Society in Which Women Shine](#) (Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality)
- ②. Issues related to Japanese territory:
 1. [Senkaku Islands](#)
 2. [Takeshima](#)
 3. [Northern Territories](#)
 4. [Sea of Japan](#)
- ③. Tourist information:
 1. [Japan National Tourism Organization](#)
 2. [Visit Japan Links](#)
 3. [Guide to Japanese Visas](#)
 4. [Japanese Inn Group](#)
- ④. Study in Japan:
 1. [Study in Japan](#)
 2. [Gateway to Study in Japan](#)
- ⑤. Cultural exchange:
 1. [Japan Foundation](#)
 2. [Japan: Fascinating diversity](#)
- ⑥. Other useful sites:
 1. [JETRO \(Japan External Trade Organization\)](#)
 2. [The Slovenia-Japan Business Council](#)
 3. [J-GoodTech \(Matching website for leading companies\)](#)
 4. [World Heritage in Japan](#)
 5. [Web Japan](#)
 6. [Nihongo Starter \(Online Japanese Course\)](#)
- ⑦. [Japanese restaurants in Slovenia](#)



Please send your opinions or questions to: info@s2.mofa.go.jp

If you no longer wish to receive the Japan Fresh News, please send us an e-mail: info@s2.mofa.go.jp.

*Tōrō Nagashi (灯籠流し), "Lantern cruise" (Shōrō Nagashi)

Tōrō Nagashi festival is a long-held Japanese tradition where candle-lit lanterns are released into rivers to guide the spirits of ancestors back to the other world during the *Obon* season in August. *Tōrō* is another word for lantern, while *nagashi* means "cruise, flow".

The ceremony may be done on some other days of the year for other reasons such as to commemorate the end of World War II, those lost in the bombing of Hiroshima, etc. This peaceful and beautiful custom is a gesture of respect for those who have passed away and gives participants a moment to think about their ancestors and loved ones.



Obon is held in mid-August and it is an important gathering time when many Japanese families return to their hometowns.

It is a festival for commemorating one's ancestors. It is believed that during Obon, the ancestors' spirits return to this world in order to visit their relatives. Traditionally, during that time, lanterns are hung in front of houses to guide the ancestors' spirits, Obon dances (bon odori) are performed, graves are visited and food offerings are made at house altars and temples. Also, thousands of fireworks are lightened to welcome ancestors back to earth from the spirit world, and to send the spirits of the recently deceased off to the spirit world.

Shōrō Nagashi

There are many kinds of such events for the spirits of ancestors and **Shōrō Nagashi** ("Spirit Boat Procession") of Nagasaki is a very famous one.

On the evening of mid-August, the Shōrō Nagashi starts. Beautifully adorned boats carrying the spirits of those that have passed away that year are carried to the harbour. Hundreds of these shōrō-bune (sacred boats made of bamboo and straws, decorated with lighted lanterns) are drawn along the city's main streets with the sounds of bells and firecrackers. After reaching the harbor, recently these boats are not released in the sea or river, but dismantled.

This festival is very popular also because of Masashi Sada, a native song-writer from Nagasaki, who released his song "Shōrō nagashi" in 1974, a big hit with a 1, 3 million sales.

