



JAPAN FRESH NEWS

No. 14 (May 2015)

by the Embassy of Japan in Slovenia

(*Tango no Sekku: 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.)



- * Don't miss **this year's Japan Day** on Saturday, 30 May 2015!! (Sec. IV)
- * Japanese Maglev train sets new world record of **603kmph**. (Sec. II)
- * Now is the perfect time to **invest in Japan**! Why Japan? (Sec. II)
- * **Rakugo workshop**: a fun day with a lot of laughter. (Sec. III)
- * **Shakuhachi and strings concert** on 27 May. (Sec. IV)
- * Open call: **9th International Manga Award**! (Sec. IV)



I. Fresh/important news

~ Visit to Palau by Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress ~

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan made an official visit to the Republic of Palau, from 8th to 9th April 2015, to mourn and pay tribute to those who died in the war and pray for peace in this 70th year after the end of the war. Their Majesties also received welcome from the Presidents of Palau, Micronesia and the Marshall Islands as well as people of Palau. [Details](#)

~ G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting ~

From 13th to 16th April 2015, Japanese Foreign Minister Kishida visited Lubeck in Germany and attended the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Minister Kishida carried out exchanges of views among the G7 members, which share fundamental values, regarding urgent issues in international affairs. [Details](#)

~ Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Foreign Minister's Meeting ~

The Seventh Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting between Japan, China and South Korea was convened in Seoul on 21 March 2015. Three Ministers, including Japanese Foreign Minister Kishida, acknowledged that there has been steady progress in trilateral cooperation in various areas, and discussed the current status and future directions of specific cooperation projects. [Details](#)

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

On April 17, the Government of Japan announced to provide Guinea with Ebola test kits newly developed by a Japanese University (Nagasaki University) and a Japanese company (Toshiba), in the amount of USD 4.02 million. 2 Japanese medical experts have been dispatched to Guinea to offer training on these new test kits. Also, 2 Japanese medical experts were dispatched to Sierra Leone in April. Total funding by the Japanese Government amounts to approximately 173 million USD. [Details](#)

II. Economic/Business News

~ Japanese Maglev train sets new world record of 603kmph ~

A Japanese magnetic levitation (Maglev) train has set a new world record speed of 603 kilometers per hour. The Central Japan Railway Company train set the record on April 21, 2015 at a 42.8 kilometer test track in Yamanashi Prefecture, west of Tokyo. The company plans to launch the service between Tokyo and the central city of Nagoya by 2027 and the 280km journey would take only about 40 minutes. For more information, check [here](#).

~ Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan ~

On March 17, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan adopted the "Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan". These promises include:

1. Increased usage of foreign languages in stores, hospitals and on roads
2. Expansion of free public wireless LAN network
3. Increased ease of access by business jets at the local airports
4. Strengthening of English language education throughout Japan
5. Facilitation of consultation by the Japanese government for foreign businesses with large investment

[Details](#)

~ Now is the perfect time to invest in Japan! ~

Following are 5 reasons to invest in Japan:

1. The Japanese economy is back on a recovery track through Abenomics' dynamic measures.
2. As the world's 3rd largest economy, Japan is a huge and sophisticated market.
3. Japan has an intellectual accumulation that generates innovation.
4. Japan's business environment is highly evaluated by the World Economic Forum and ranked 1st for "Business Sophistication" with highly developed social infrastructure.
5. Japan is a country where foreign persons can live safely and pleasantly with a strong social stability and well developed medical services.

More details [here](#).

III. Recent events

~ Lectures and workshops: "Cultural Study of the Rising Sun" ~

Between January and March 2015, the Japanese Embassy organized lectures and workshops about Japan and Japanese culture at the following three schools in Slovenia:

1. On 29 January 2015, Ms. Nataša Brunec, Slovenian Origami artist, held a workshop on Origami at the Gimnazija Franceta Prešerna Kranj.

2. On 23 February 2015, Mr. Luka Culiberg, Japanese language lecturer in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ljubljana, made a lecture about Japanese culture and society at the Gimnazija Murska Sobota.
 3. On 25th March 2015, Ms. Nataša Brunec held another workshop on Origami at the Osnovna šola Bežigrad.
- More details [here](#).



~ Rakugo workshop at Economy High School Ljubljana ~

On 1 April 2015 students and teachers of Economy High School in Ljubljana had an unforgettable experience of traditional Japanese comic story-telling, presented by Ms. Diane Kichijitsu, master of English language rakugo. Following a short introduction and performance, students were able to learn some typical gestures from rakugo stories. It was a fun day with a lot of laughter! [Details](#)



IV. Future events

~ Shakuhachi and strings concert ~

The Embassy of Japan is kindly inviting you to a concert of traditional Japanese instrument shakuhachi and strings **on Wednesday, 27 May 2015 at 19:30 at Prežihov Voranc Library**. The shakuhachi is famous for its beautiful haunting tones and is a testament to the elegance of traditional Japanese culture. Spend an evening in the company of classical and modern musical pieces performed by Tadashi Tajima (shakuhachi), Noriko Kawamura (violin), Yasumichi Iwaki (viola) and Fumio Shirato (bass). **Admission free.** [Details](#)

~ Japan Day 2015 ~

The Embassy of Japan is organizing the already 4th Japan Day that will take place on **Saturday, 30 May 2015 from 10:00 to 17:00** at the Marmorna Hall of the **Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre**. Visitors will be able to experience even more Japan than in previous years! So come and enjoy delicious food at a special food corner, discover the rich Japanese culture, including origami, traditional games, language and more, at a special culture corner and take your little ones to the children's corner for some arts and crafts. This and much more will await you at this unique event dedicated to the Land of the rising sun! Entrance is **free of charge**. [Details](#)

~ 9th International Manga Award ~

Do you draw Manga and would like to show it to an expert jury for consideration? If yes, then you are the perfect candidate for the 9th International Manga Award organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan. Submit your work **between 27 April - 12 June 2015**, compete for the Gold or Silver Awards and travel to Japan! [Details](#)

V. Other

~ 12th Slovenia Open in para table tennis in Laško ~

The National Paralympic Committee of Slovenia is organizing the 12th Slovenia Open in para table tennis in the sports hall **Tri lilije in Laško between 5 and 9 May 2015**. The Japanese National Paralympic Team is also participating. How about going there and rooting for them? Entrance free. [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)
 4. [Keynote speech at the 13th IISS Asian Security Summit](#) ("The Shangri-la Dialogue")
 5. [Speech at the Sixty-Ninth Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations](#)
- 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](#)



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info@s2.mofa.go.jp.

* **Tango no Sekku: 端午の節句, Boys' Festival**

Tango no sekku or Boys' Festival is celebrated on May 5th. Originally it was celebrated in the houses of samurai warriors. It celebrated boys' courage and determination. Many of the symbols of this day are about having the character of a samurai.

On this day, Japanese families with boys fly carp-shaped kites (**koinobori**) outside the house and display dolls of famous warriors (**gogatsu ningyo**), armors and traditional Japanese military helmet (**kabuto**), inside.

In recent years, as more people are living in smaller apartments, the koinobori and the inside decoration have also gotten smaller. Big warrior dolls, symbols of strong, healthy boys are often replaced by a smaller sized dolls or only kabuto.



Koinobori



Gogatsu ningyo



Kabuto

The symbolic flower of Tango no Sekku is a type of iris called **shobu**. The shobu has long leaves that resemble swords. Boys traditionally take shobu leaf baths on this day.



Shobu leaf bath

One traditional food served on this day is **kashiwa mochi**. It's a rice cake steamed with sweet beans and wrapped in an oak leaf. Another traditional food is **chimaki**, which is rice wrapped in bamboo leaves.



Kashiwa mocha & Chimaki