

awa life

Hanami Map

March 2020

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All About Toppo!



TOPIA

Awa Life is a Monthly Publication of the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association

The first day of spring, along with the blooming of the cherry blossoms, will begin in late March. It's the perfect chance to get together with friends or family and go view the beautiful flowers. You can find a hanami map in this month's Awa Life. Along with the blooming of the sakura, you can also experience the Big Hina Matsuri in Katsuura at the Hina Doll Museum until April 5th! Close by, the Ohinasama no Okuzashiki & Sakamoto Doll Road will also be held until March 15th. In February, TOPIA, along with 20 people from various countries such as Vietnam, Mongolia, Peru, Australia, and Taiwan visited Katsuura to help set up the hina dolls in preparation for the event. Make sure to take the time to check out the sakura and hina dolls before they disappear!

For all of those who like writing, please feel free to submit an article to us at any point in time about basically anything. There are a few limitations though, such as you can't write about religion, politics, commercial activities or businesses or anything that we deem inappropriate. But, other than that, we would be more than happy to receive articles about anything and everything including but not limited to concerts, lectures, other events, culture, sports, community group information or anything cool that's happening in your local community.

We highly appreciate all of your articles and we love reading them. So if that writing bug of yours is buzzing about, grab a pen or a computer and write and send away! Please send all submissions to our email:

awalife@gmail.com

Your editors,
Sydney and Nico

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Download a PDF file of awa life or view the online version by going to TOPIA's website!



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Comparison between Japan's and Senegal's Education Systems

By Abdoulaye Diasse

Japan and Senegal have built education systems with some similarities and many differences. In this article, we will try to compare four aspects of the Japanese and Senegalese education systems. These aspects are the promotion of equity, time at work, school management and last, but not least, student's achievements.



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equity is a reality everywhere, whether in rural or urban areas. School curricula, facilities and equipment, teacher qualifications and salaries, and public expenditures per student are almost the same throughout the country. Japanese schools, especially those in the public sector, are oriented towards extreme equality. On the other hand, in Senegal, there is a big contrast between urban areas and rural ones. Even if school curricula are the same, school facilities and equipment are more developed in urban areas than rural ones, where one can find classrooms made from grass and pieces of wood, and young teachers without much experience in teaching. There is also

inequity in teacher's salaries. In both countries, salaries depend on the teacher's status and position, and not on the hours spent at work. The higher the teacher's level, and the more years of experience he has, the larger his salary is.

In Japan, one of the most distinctive characteristics of education is that schooling occupies a position of great weight in both student's and teacher's lives. Japanese children and teachers spend a great amount of time at school. Students tend to stay after school to participate in extra-curricular activities, or to play sports or games with their classmates. Some do not leave until the evening, with a lot of homework left to do. In Senegal, time at work is not as overloaded as it is in Japan; teachers have to work compulsorily from Monday to Friday for a whole 29 hours per week at the elementary level. Extra-curricular classes are not regularly organized as is the case in Japan. Elementary school students start classes at 8 am and leave school at 1 pm. They go back in the afternoon only on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3pm to 5pm. Senegalese teachers are accustomed to going on strikes, which has a negative impact on their time at work, and the (school) program is typically not completed by the end of the school year.

Schools are well organized, well equipped, and

well managed in Japan. The good management of Japanese schools can be felt whenever you cross the threshold of the entrance gate. Each school is under the control of a principal, helped by a deputy, to achieve his pedagogical and administrative mission. Teachers are under the order of the principal and are conscious of their mission and fulfill their duties well. They always arrive at school on time, dare not miss classes, and don't complain much about wages. In Senegal, school management is not as successful as it is in Japan because of some teachers having a lack of principals that causes them to cheat. Some of them are not conscious of their mission, and they often come late to school, much of the time without preparations. Teachers are always objecting to low salaries and are participating in many strikes, which has a negative impact on the annual schedule of work.



Regarding student's achievements in mathematics and sciences, Japanese pupils perform very well. Among 34 OECD countries, Japan is ranked second in mathematics and first in both reading and science (PISA report 2012). (Japan's scores have fallen in recent years, but they are still

within the top 20.) Some 24% of students in Japan reach the highest levels of mathematics proficiency (Level 5 or 6). At these levels, students can develop and work with models in complex situations, and work strategically using critical thinking and reasoning skills. Opposite to Japan, Senegal national, regional, and international assessments have shown that Senegalese elementary school students are lacking in French (reading) and mathematics. The PASEC tests (2014) revealed that only 46.5% of students in sixth grade are achieving desired levels in French (reading), and only 58.8% in mathematics.

In a nutshell, we can obviously see, in reference to the above-mentioned aspects of comparison, that there are more differences than similarities between the two education systems. Truthfully, the Japanese education system is more developed and organized, compared with the Senegalese one. In fact, quality of education and system efficiency are realities in Japan and this could be revealed without contest through student's achievements. Therefore, even if Senegal is a developing country, Japan could be a good model of reference for the development of our education system.

26th AJET Tokushima English Musical Schedule

Be sure to enjoy "The Wizard of Oz", at a venue near you! Admission is free!

Performance Schedule:

March 1 (Sun) 15:00-17:00

Kitajima Town Sosei Hall

March 7 (Sat) 15:00-17:00

Ishii Chuo Kominkan

March 8 (Sun) 18:00-20:00

Katsuura Nouseon Kankyou Kaizen Center

March 15 (Sun) 14:00-16:00

Yoshinogawa City Amenity Center

March 20 (Fri) 17:30-19:30

Wakimachi Theater Odeon-za



What I Like and Fear the Most in Naruto City

By: Wayne Wang

As an international student from Taiwan at Naruto University of Education since this October, I have experienced and seen many things that I do not see back in Taiwan. Take one ordinary thing for instance. I need to take the ferry to go shopping for my daily necessities. Usually, I ride a scooter back in my hometown, New Taipei City. Speaking of scooters, the total number of scooters I have seen in the past three months in Naruto City is far fewer than the number I see in one day in my hometown. Here in Naruto City, two things with the same name that I see every day are what I like and fear the most: Kumo. The kumo of the sky and the kumo of the insect.

These are the first two things I became particularly aware of when I first came here, and these two things strangely have something in common as well, that is, they are EVERYWHERE! Whenever I look up, I can always see these two things together. One in the sky and one in the trees. The beautiful kumo in the sky change every day into various charming shapes. When the weather is nice and clear, the cotton-like white kumo against the bright blue sky are especially mesmerizing, which makes me feel very happy. Nevertheless, when I look away to the other side, I can always see some black kumo of the insect dangling in their webs on the trees. Some are big and some are small. At that moment, a stream of electricity goes through my whole body with a sense of fear, and this happens every time without exception.

It is such a weird experience for me to see the combination of two things I like and fear the most at the same time, and their names also happen to be the same in Japanese. What a coincidence! And yet, this is undoubtedly a very unique experience I can only have here in Naruto City.

*Note: "Spiders" and "sky" are both called "kumo" in Japanese.

雲 - Cloud

蜘蛛 - Spider



All About Toppo

By: Sydney Bartig

If you have ever visited TOPIA, or have seen some materials that were produced by TOPIA, you may have noticed an interesting, yellow character. That character is actually always in the lower-right corner of Awa Life's front page as well! Their name is Toppo, and they are the mascot of TOPIA. Although you may have noticed Toppo before, did you know that all the colours Toppo was drawn with, and even Toppo's design, all have symbolic meanings? Let's take a look at Toppo!

Toppo was actually created in the year 2000 to celebrate TOPIA's 10-year anniversary. Toppo was created with an image of Tokushima in mind, and their design represents famous and unique things of Tokushima. Starting with Toppo's clothing, the green shirt that they wear is based off of one of Tokushima's most famous products: the green sudachi. Their red shoes are also based off of another local food, the Naruto kintoki (sweet potatoes).

dots on Toppo's cheeks represent the yamamomo, or Japanese bayberry, which is actually the prefectural tree of Tokushima. The antenna on Toppo's head also has a few meanings. It is in the shape of a T to represent Tokushima, but it is also used to represent the famous Naruto whirlpools. Lastly, it is an actual antenna that is used to collect information from all over the world!

Finally, you may have noticed that Toppo has a globe in their hand as well. The blue colour of the globe is to represent the awa ai (awa blue) of Tokushima prefecture. Toppo's wish is for peace among all people of the world!



Toppo's appearance is also symbolic. The tiny red

Gairaigo Galore



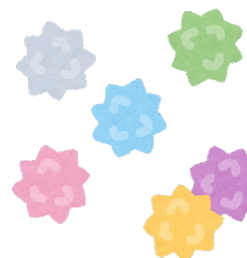
金平糖 (konpeitō; sugar stars)

By Sydney Bartig

Have you ever seen or tasted Japan's star-shaped sugar candies? They're actually called "konpeitō" and can be found in sweets shops or even your local grocery store. Although the plain flavor is standard for konpeitō, there are actually many different flavors that you can try such as strawberry, yogurt, sakura, chestnut, and many more. The candy is actually quite popular in Japan. To this day, it is even used as a gift by the imperial family!

While nowadays konpeitō is known as a traditional Japanese sweet, did you know that these cute candies weren't originally from Japan? They were originally brought to Japan from Portugal in the 15th century. In order to gain favor, a Christian missionary from Portugal presented these candies, known as "confeito" in Portuguese, to the daimyo Oda Nobunaga. Nobunaga was very pleased by these interesting candies. At that time, sugar was quite expensive in Japan. As konpeitō is of course pure sugar, it was a treat exclusively for the wealthy.

Although originally a Portuguese word, konpeitō uses the kanji “金平糖”. (金 : Gold 平 : Flat 糖 : Sugar) These are primarily ateji (当て字), which are used to represent a word phonetically, rather than by the meaning of the characters. Although many borrowed words are now written in katakana, there are some such as konpeitō that have their own kanji!



Awa Shoku: Edible Winter Blossoms

By: Lance Kita

Some of you may not realize how often you eat flowers. The florets of broccoli ブロッコリー on the side of your steak or Hamburg steak at a Western-style (yoshoku, 洋食) restaurant, or the cauliflower カリフラワー rice you eat as part of a low-carb diet are actually compact clusters of edible flower buds. Even more surprisingly, Tokushima is a major domestic producer of both, and we are in the middle of the harvest season for these delicious blossoms.

If you drive through the Kokufu or Kawauchi districts of Tokushima City, you'll see wide expanses of "cabbage fields"

during the winter months. These may be broccoli and cauliflower fields respectively, which are members of the cabbage family. Tokushima Prefecture is a top five domestic producer of both crops, and was once the #1 grower of cauliflower in the nation in the early 2010s!

That means you can find reasonable local broccoli and cauliflower at supermarkets from late fall to early spring. Check the local produce shelves for the best bargains. Better yet, check out farmer's markets in Kokufu, Awa City, and Komatsushima City (broccoli) or Kawauchi, Aizumi Town, or Kamiita Town (cauliflower) for discounted oversize produce...cheaper and bigger, a double bargain!

Since both vegetables have Mediterranean origins, they don't factor so heavily into Japanese cuisine. Steamed broccoli is served alongside Western-style dishes or as tempura, and cauliflower is most often pickled.

Both are incredibly versatile and their firm texture holds up to almost any cooking technique, whether steamed, lightly blanched, stir-fried, deep-fried, or roasted on the stove or in the oven. They're even good in stews and soups, although I suggest adding broccoli in the last few minutes of the cooking time to preserve some crunch and texture. My family has a secret sauce (mayonnaise mixed with a little soy sauce...shhh, don't tell anyone) that is the perfect dip for steamed/boiled florets of either veggie.

I suggest adding chopped broccoli to potage

soups (potato or corn) or gratin as an easy, quick nutritional boost. The florets are also one of my favorite stir-fry veggies (I get tired of bean sprouts, carrots, and cabbage). Shrimp and broccoli with black pepper and garlic, or chicken and broccoli with Chinese black bean (douchijiang) or spicy bean paste (toubanjiang) are great quick dinners or flavor-packed lunches. Boiled florets, chunks

of imitation crab meat (kanikama カニかま), and a sudachi mayo make for a wonderful salad, and check out the May 2018 issue of Awa Life for a dressed salad (aemono 和え物) recipe that's



Clouds and Trees - Cauliflower and Broccoli are fun-shaped, crunchy, and incredibly versatile for cooking.

perfect for broccoli.

The aforementioned low-carb cauliflower rice can be extended to make a healthy fried rice or rice bowl (donburi 丼) and there are even chain restaurants substituting finely-chopped cauliflower instead of rice in their popular curry and rice カレーライス dishes. I like pan-roasted cauliflower "steaks" made by cutting the head into 1-cm thick slabs, slowly cooking both sides in olive oil or butter in a frying pan until browned and caramelized, then glazed with citrus soy sauce (ponzu ポン酢). Stew cauliflower florets in tomato sauce, cream sauce, curry roux, or Thai green coconut curry. Breaded, deep-fried cauliflower are a vegetarian alternative to karaage, and go well with a curry yogurt or Thai peanut dipping sauce (or that secret sauce from my family).

Recently, newer hybrids of these budding veggies are showing up in markets. The coolest one is the Romanesco ロマネスコ, a light-green, fractally spiral spiked cauliflower found at nicer supermarkets and roadside stations (Michi no Eki 道の駅). You can also find thin, sticklike broccolini (Japanese brand name Stick Señor スティックセニョール) and Cauliflore/Stick Cauliflower (カリフローレ/スティックカリフラワー) if you're not a fan of the thick hard stems.

The sight of cherry blossoms may not fill your eyes until April, but you can fill your stomach with the edible blossoms of broccoli and cauliflower as you await the coming spring.

Difference Between [失礼します] & [失礼しました]

This is the story of something that happened the other day at a company's Japanese class. The students entered the conference room, which was used as a classroom, with a cheerful [失礼します]. After the class was finished, everyone exited the room with a [失礼しました]. Perhaps they used that phrase because class was over and they were exiting the room, but upon hearing it, something felt off to me. Today, let's think about the difference between [失礼します] and [失礼しました] in situations like the one above.

Both [失礼します] and [失礼しました] are polite phrases, but the differences are more than just a difference between 「～ます形 (非過去)」 (non-past form) and 「～た形 (過去)」 (past form).

When to use [失礼します]: As a greeting/farewell such as in the following situations.

1. When you enter/exit a room

Examples: when entering/exiting a room of a division or department that isn't your own, another company's office, an acquaintance or friend's house, etc.

2. When returning home

When returning home after work, a meeting, etc.

3. When leaving a place briefly

For example, when you need to briefly step out of a meeting to take an urgent phone call.

When to use [失礼しました]: As an apology when you have caused trouble to others.

1. When entering/exiting a room, knowing that it will cause trouble to the other party.

For example, when the department head is in a meeting, but you have an urgent matter to report to them, you would use this phrase when entering/exiting the room.

2. When there is a misunderstanding, or you make a small mistake.

Used when accidentally calling someone by the wrong name, taking someone's umbrella by mistake, etc.

3. When you fail to recognize someone you know.

For example, when you pass by someone you know without recognizing them and they then call out to you.

As you can see from the above examples, [失礼します] would be used in the case of returning home after work/a meeting, or in the case of exiting a room. This is why I felt something was off about the students using [失礼しました]. That phrase has the nuance that they had caused me some kind of trouble during class.

Practice Questions: Decide whether to use [失礼します] or [失礼しました] for each question.

- ① 一日の仕事が終わり、会社を出るとき「失礼します／失礼しました」と言って帰る。
- ② 「田中さん」の名前を間違えて「中田さん」呼んでしまったとき、「(失礼します／失礼しました)、田中さん！」と言い直した。
- ③ 取引先の事務所を訪ねて、部屋に入るときに「失礼します／失礼しました」と言う。
- ④ 大学の先輩とすれ違い、「鈴木君じゃないか」と言われて振り返り、「失礼します／失礼しました。」と気がつかなかったことを謝った。
- ⑤ 会社でミーティングが終わり、まだ上司がいる部屋を出るときに「失礼します／失礼しました」とあいさつする。
- ⑥ 部長に呼ばれ、部屋のドア開けると電話中だったので「失礼します／失礼しました」と言ってドアを閉めた。

Answers: ①失礼します ②失礼しました ③失礼します ④失礼しました ⑤失礼します ⑥失礼しました

Events & Memoranda

TOPIA Japanese Classes 2020 (Term 1)

- ☐ Time: 10:30-12:00
- ☐ Location: Meeting rooms at TOPIA
- ☐ Textbook: We will be using the "Minna no Nihongo I" or the "Minna no Nihongo II" (2nd edition) textbooks (2,750 yen for the book and audio CD). Please prepare the textbooks on your own. As well, there will be themed lessons on various topics such as seasons and life in Tokushima.
- ☐ Fee: Free

DAY	TEACHER	LEVEL	CLASS DESCRIPTION	
TUE	Ms. Tamaki	Elementary 2, 3	We will study various forms and expressions such as potential, volitional, imperative, prohibitive, conditional, reasoning, passive, causative, and honorific expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II – from Chapter 26~50	From April 7 (25 times)
WED	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up in different levels. *For parents of young children, a childcare worker will be on hand to look after your child during the lesson (please inquire in advance). Due to unforeseen circumstances, the rooms may change.	From April 8 (20 times)
THU	Ms. Yamada	Beginner	We will take the first step towards learning basic expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 1~13	From April 9 (20 times)
FRI	Ms. Aoki	Elementary 1	We will study various verb forms and sentence patterns using those verb forms. Text: Minna no Nihongo I – from Chapter 14~25	From April 10 (20 times)
SUN	JTM	Elementary 3	We will study reasoning, passive, causative and honorific expressions. Text: Minna no Nihongo II – from Chapter 39~50	From April 5 (20 times)
	Volunteers	Group Lesson	This is a flexible group study class split up in different levels.	

TUE	Ms. Kimura Others	Special Beginners Class	A class for those who cannot read or write hiragana or katakana. We will study the basics such as, the Japanese alphabet, greetings, numbers, and items. We will also be learning about Tokushima.	You may join at anytime
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For more information see TOPIA's homepage: <http://www.topia.ne.jp>

Japanese classes are also available at the Anan International Association, Aizumi Town International Exchange Association, Yoshinogawa International Exchange Association, NPO Mima no Sato, Miyoshi City International Exchange Association and Minami Multicultural Coexistence Network "Harmony". (as of March 2020)

Let's Try the O-Henro Walk!

The Shikoku O-Henro is a pilgrimage to 88 temples on Shikoku. This pilgrimage was established by the well-known Buddhist monk, Kobo Daishi (also known as Kukai). Not only is it popular, it is the most famous pilgrimage in Japan, with a 1200-year history. Why not join us for a trek to temples No. 13 through 17? We will first travel by bus to temple No. 13, then trek on foot to temples No. 14 through 17. We will then return to Tokushima Station from the bus stop nearest temple No.17. Please contact the TIA office via telephone (088-622-6066) or e-mail (info@tia81.com) to apply to participate. Only the first 20 applicants will be accepted.

Date & Time: March 28th (Sat)

Start: 7:50 am. Meet at in front of Starbucks Coffee at JR Tokushima Station

Return: 4:00 pm. Arrive at JR Tokushima Station

Participation Fee: TIA members and foreigners – 300 yen / Non-members – 800 yen

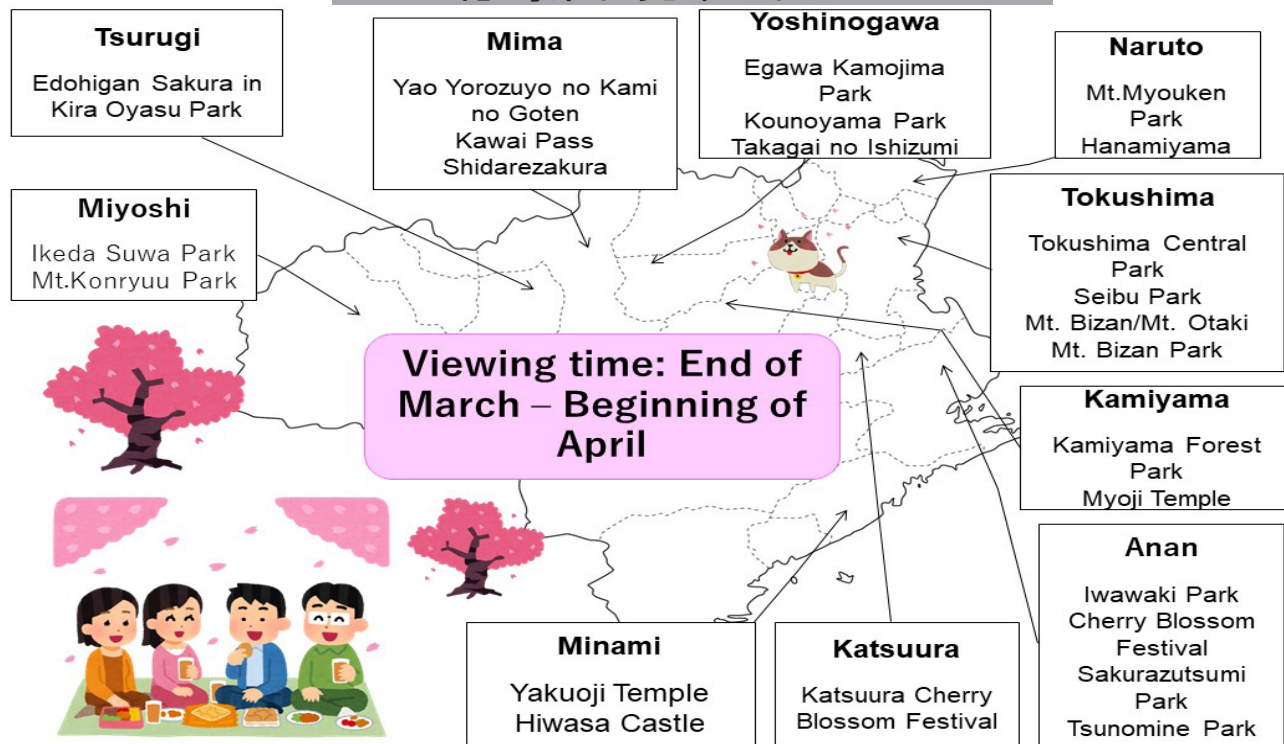
*ONLY bus fare and leisure insurance are included. Lunch fee not included.

Lunch: BRING YOUR OWN LUNCH, SNACKS AND BEVERAGES

Other: The trek will cover approximately 8 kilometers. Wear comfortable walking shoes and clothing. a rain jacket/poncho, hat, and walking stick are also recommended. We will be travelling by bus and on foot, so please only bring minimal necessities in a comfortable backpack.

Events & Memoranda

Tokushima Hanami Map 2020 徳島県花見案内図 2020



The 2020 Tebajima Art Exhibition 出羽島アート展 2020

Tebajima will become an island full of art for 9 days. Using the island as a stage, a variety of artists will display their works which express their feelings toward Tebajima.

When: March 20th (Fri) - 29th (Sun)
9:00 - 15:00

Where: Mugi, Ama District, Tebajima

Fee: Adults: 1,000 Yen,
Elementary Students: 500 Yen
(Includes round-trip boat fee)

Info: Mugi Tourism Association

TEL: 0884-72-0065

URL: <https://mugi-kankou.com/event/>

9日間出羽島がアートの島に！

島を舞台にさまざまなアーティストたちが出羽島への思いをこめた作品を展示・展開する地域参画型のアートです。

日時：3月20日（金・祝）～29日（日）
9時00分～15時00分予定

場所：海部郡牟岐町 出羽島

料金：大人 1,000 円 小学生 500 円（往復乗船料込み）

お問い合わせ：牟岐町観光協会

TEL: 0884-72-0065

URL: <https://mugi-kankou.com/event/>



Reminder: The 2020 Tokushima Marathon will take place on Sunday, March 22nd! The application period is already over, but be sure to go out and cheer on the runners!



Counselling Service at TOPIA・トピアの相談窓口

TOPIA provides consultation on everyday life, education, labor, medical institutions, and disaster prevention; and information on sightseeing spots to overseas residents and visitors. When necessary, we will refer you to the appropriate organization that can assist with your needs. Counselling is available in English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Japanese. Please note that although every effort will be made, we may not be able to deal with all cases.

Everyday, 10:00 - 18:00 (closed during the New Year's holidays)

Tel: 088-656-3312 or 088-656-3313 (allows for three-way conversations with an interpreter)