

awa life

NHK Tokushima and TOPIA
Team Up to Teach About...
Toilets?

November 2025

#420

Tsubakidomari Town's
Dara-Dara Festival

Letter from SUKETO
NAKAYOSHI

Nihongo Know-it-all:
Opposite Day?

Joroku-ji Temple, Tokushima City



TOPIA

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

Welcome to November, everyone! How have you all been spending your Autumn so far? Is your Fall 2025 all about reading, eating good foods, sports, or perhaps just hibernating? Whatever you've chosen to do this year, we hope you're living it up! There is still plenty of Autumn left in Tokushima, including many beautiful *momiji* leaves to be seen. Check this month's events section for a map of Tokushima with the peak times to see Autumn leaves in various spots around the prefecture. Make sure to grab a jacket and stay warm while you're at it!

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. Additionally, please keep articles around ~400-700 words (if writing in English), or ~1000 characters (if writing in Japanese). If you have any questions or want to check if your topic will work, feel free to reach out to us before you start writing.

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:

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Tsubakidomari Town's Dara Dara Festival

By: Chen Sizhe

At the invitation of an acquaintance living in Anan City, in mid-September I headed south with two colleagues from the Tokushima Prefecture International Exchange Association, my fellow Coordinator for International Relations, and three friends from Africa and Laos here studying at the Naruto University of Education. Our purpose was to experience the "Dara Dara Festival" in Tsubakidomari Town, Anan City, enjoy the fireworks over the sea, and savor fresh seafood. The eight of us, brought together across borders, created unforgettable memories enveloped by the sea breeze and fireworks.



Our group (plus one more companion, who took the picture for us!)

operated restaurant. Upon entering, we were greeted by an abundant assortment of fresh seafood and a salty aroma filling the air. Though the meal was on the more expensive side, it was worth every yen as the taste of the dishes far exceeded our expectations. The fatty sashimi melted in our mouths, every seafood item was exceptionally fresh, and even the plain white rice had a mild sweetness that made it all the more delicious. Though I don't usually eat much plain rice, found myself going for seconds that day. The sea bream (*Tai*) sashimi was especially outstanding; fresh and tender, it was bursting with the ocean's umami.



Parts of our delicious seafood dinner

To fully enjoy the festival, we arrived in Anan City around 6:30p.m. We had already reserved a seafood course for us at a local establishment that served as both a guesthouse and a family-

Tsubakidomari Town's Dara Dara Festival

Here's a brief introduction to the history of the "Dara Dara Festival." At Sada Shrine in Tsubakidomari Town, Anan City, Tokushima Prefecture, the Autumn Festival is held annually from a Saturday to Monday in mid-September. It began as a festival to honor the *Mori Jingobei* clan, the leaders of the Awa Navy, as well as to pray for a bountiful catch that year. In the past, the festival had no fixed duration; it could end in



Thousands of lanterns line the streets for miles during the festival

a single day or last for almost a full month (this led to its name, as "*dara dara*" means "endless")! Now fixed at three days, it still retains a free-spirited atmosphere, with events like plunging a *mikoshi* into the sea, drinking parties, floats, Awa Odori, and mochi throwing. However, the second day's "Cape Festival"

is particularly spectacular. It includes a grand *mikoshi* procession into the sea, a fishing boat parade, and fireworks over the sea.

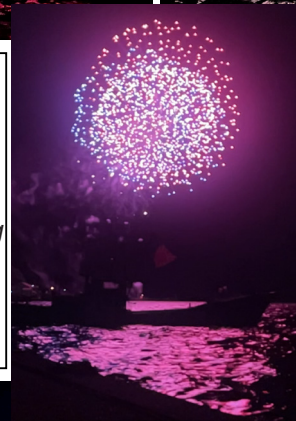
Come nightfall, we watched as the Tsubakidomari Town fireworks display began at 8p.m. Not just any fireworks display—these fireworks were special, launched straight from boats on the sea. Large blooms opened in the night sky, their light reflecting on the water's surface, causing the waves to appear as if they were sparkling, and illuminating the silhouettes of the other boats on the water. However, the second "act" in the fireworks show is what this festival is known for. One boat raced back and forth down the coast, throwing fireworks off behind them as they went, which then exploded on the water's surface, causing it to appear as if the fireworks were exploding underwater. It was truly a one-of-a-kind, heart-pounding sight to behold as the boat weaved deftly around the others surrounding it. Anan's autumn sea breeze carried a hint of salt, filling our hearts along with the fireworks. We stood by the shore, faces open to the wind, gazing

up at the bursts coloring the night sky. At that moment, even our very breath seemed to become part of the surreal beauty of the mountains and sea.

This early autumn journey to Anan was not only a feast for the palate and the eyes, but also reminded me of the warmth of friendship. The unique atmosphere of the Dara Dara Festival, the fresh seafood, the magnificent fireworks, and the exchange with international friends all made this trip a memory I will forever cherish.



Pictured above, right: Fireworks above the sea reflecting different colors on the water



Pictured below: Fireworks thrown out behind the boat as it speeds along the coast



Letter from SUKETO NAKAYOSHI

By: Kazue Inoue (Center for Early Childhood Education and Care SUKETO NAKAYOSHI)

As their time at the Center reaches the half-year mark, relationships between the children begin to deepen as they grow together. Along with this, however, comes a rise in conflict between them. In particular, kids around 2 years of age are still in a period of relative self-centeredness, and we often see this give rise to conflict during play, such as when sharing (or rather, not sharing,) toys. When a situation such as this arises, here's how we can handle it:

1. Empathize with the child's emotions ("I hear you; you really want to play with that toy.")
2. Express the other party's feelings ("Your friend really wants to play with the toy, too.")
3. Explain about the rules of interactions with others (How to use phrases such as "It's my turn now," "Thank you," "I'm sorry,"; How to take turns to make things go smoothly)

Children learn how to get along with others by playing, interacting, and inevitably, butting heads with each other at times. When conflict arises, try to view it as an opportunity for growth—a teaching moment. Listen to their feelings, and together, consider how the other party is feeling, and how to successfully resolve the conflict.

< Tofu Dumplings Recipe >

- ① Knead together 80g of glutinous rice flour (しらたまこ 白玉粉), 4g of sugar, and 80g of silken tofu until

it forms a soft, ear-lobe-like consistency.

- ② Once kneaded, separate and roll the dough into balls of roughly the same size. Press down on the center with your fingers to flatten them, making them easier to cook through.

- ③ In a pot, bring ample water to a boil. Insert the dumplings from step ②, and boil for at least 1 minute after they float to the surface.

- ④ When done, drain in a strainer and cool by running under cold water.

- ⑤ Mix 24g of roasted soybean powder (きな粉), 20g of sugar, and 0.4g of table salt. Sprinkle the mixture over the dumplings, serve, and enjoy!



*Since this recipe uses tofu, the dumplings will stay soft and moist even once cooled.

*Do not feed to children ages 0-1, as this recipe contains glutinous rice, which may be a choking hazard.

NHK Tokushima and TOPIA Team Up to Teach about...Toilets?

By: Riley Henke

Recently, the Tokushima Prefectural International Exchange Association teamed up with NHK Tokushima for one purpose—to teach the importance of portable toilets in times of disaster.



On September 28, 2025, three members of TOPIA staff set out with 18 foreign residents of Tokushima in

tow for a study tour of the Tokushima Prefectural Disaster Prevention Center. The day consisted of two parts; a guided tour of the Center to learn vital disaster prevention knowledge, and afterwards, a lecture by two employees of NHK (Japan Broadcasting Corporation) Tokushima about one of the ways to use the toilet when disaster strikes. Both portions of the study tour included live Vietnamese and English interpretation, enabling participants to engage and ask questions in real time.

At the start of the lecture, the instructors introduced NHK WORLD JAPAN, an international service provided by the NHK that delivers

NHK Tokushima and TOPIA Team Up to Teach about...Toilets?

the latest information about Japan to people around the world in various languages. As many foreigners living in Japan struggle with finding information on natural disasters in their native language, this service is a valuable resource to stay informed with accurate information.

Next, footage was shown of an experiment demonstrating what happens to toilets in apartment buildings after a major earthquake strikes. In the video, researchers use a test site consisting of a multi-floor structure resembling an apartment with toilets on each floor, and explain how they've purposefully bent some of the plumbing pipes to recreate the warping and damage commonly seen after an earthquake. In the experiment, researchers flush a toilet on the upper floor of the structure, and observe what occurs in the toilet on the lower floor using colored water and toilet paper. After the fourth flush, the viewer begins to see bubbling and swirling occurring in the toilet on the first floor, and finally, the water overflows onto the floor. Researchers then explain how this happens due to the warped plumbing, as air trapped in the pipes reverses its flow and is forced out of the toilets on the lower floors.

After the video, instructors explained how after a major earthquake, the water supply may be cut off, leaving toilets unusable. Or how, even if the water supply is not cut off, if people continue to flush the toilet after a disaster it may inadvertently cause other toilets in the building to overflow with dirty sewage, much like in the experiment. With that in mind, how should one use the bathroom after an emergency situation? Some may be tempted to just hold it, but this can lead to serious health issues, and should be avoided.

The solution? Emergency portable toilets (although they are called "toilets", the actual item is a small bag of a powdered solidifying agent, sometimes including a toilet liner). The instructors

explained how to use them, and demonstrated the process using a model toilet and water.

To use a portable emergency toilet kit:

Step 1. Lift seat and cover toilet bowl with a plastic bag (shopping bag, trash bag, etc.)

Step 2. Pour the coagulant (solidifying agent) into the plastic bag.

Step 3. Use the toilet.

Step 4. The waste inside the bag should have solidified due to the coagulant. Remove the plastic bag from the toilet and tie it tightly to prevent any odors from escaping.

First and foremost, the most important thing is to NOT

flush the toilet after a major earthquake. Also, make sure to store enough portable toilets for at least three days ahead of time, with enough for everyone in your household.

To close out the lecture, instructors worked together with interpreters to take questions from the audience about portable toilets and general disaster prevention knowledge. Feedback from participants of the lecture was positive overall, with comments such as, "This was my first time learning about this kind of thing. I've never been taught this in my home country," and, "I learned important information for emergency situations, like how to properly use a portable toilet to prevent issues for others in my apartment."



Tokushima Culture and Reading Corner: たぬきまつり

By: Yoshiko Bando

11月1日・2日に、藍場浜公園で、「たぬきまつり」が開かれ、たくさんの人や店でにぎわいました。さらに、阿波おどりをみることができたり、有名人が来たり、歌のコンテストが開かれたり、くじびきがあたりしました。



ところで、なぜ「たぬき」をテーマにしたお祭りをするようになったのでしょうか。徳島県内には、たぬきについての言い伝えが数多く残っています。そして、県内のいたるところにたぬきのほくら（神様をまつる小さな家）があります。地元の人々は、それらを昔から大切にしてきました。

1978年、たぬきの民話をもとに、ふるさと徳島を自然・文化があふれる街として盛り上げようと、秋まつりとして、「阿波のたぬきまつり」が開催されることになりました。興味がある人は、来年友だちや家族と「たぬきまつり」に行ってみましょう！ ラッキーな人は、くじびきで自動車が当選するかも…

Vocabulary List

い つた
言い伝え legend

かみさま
神様 God; deity

まつる to worship

じもと ひと
地元の人 local people

みんわ
民話 folktale

も あ
盛り上げる to liven up

かいさい
開催される to be held (an event)

きょうみ
興味がある to be interested in

とうせん
当選する to win a prize

Opposite Day?

By: Riley Henke

Nihongo Know-it-all

When it comes to language, at the end of the day we decide what words mean and we change their meanings at will. Sometimes, a word's meaning changes and evolves so much that it comes to mean something radically different than it originally did. Today, we're going to look at a few examples of this semantic change in the Japanese language.



Our first example is the phrase 「煮詰まる」. Originally, this phrase means to "boil down," and the correct usage is to "be ready to reach to a conclusion." However, over time many have come to use this phrase to mean the opposite. In fact, in a study done by the Japanese government, nearly 50% of people indicated that they use it to mean "to not be able to reach a conclusion" or "to get stuck."

The next example is 「役不足」. Nowadays, many people mistakenly use this to mean "One is not worthy of such a role," but originally, it actually means "Such a role is beneath one." For example, if I were asked to translate for the Prime Minister of Japan, I might say 「いやいや、役不足です」 trying to indicate that I am not fit for such a prestigious role or that it is above me, but in reality, I would be saying the opposite; that I am too good for such an easy role/task. Oops!

Lastly, we have 「適当」. This one is tricky, because it has two opposite meanings depending on the context. The first meaning is "appropriate/suitable", as in "choose the appropriate answer" on a test. However, if one says 「適当に置いておいて」 it means "just put it wherever," or 「適当に選ぶ」, meaning "just choose randomly." Even if you look it up in a dictionary, it lists both meanings—suitable/proper and haphazard/careless. Time to rely on your good old friend context clues for help!

びょうき と き にほんご
病気やけがの時の日本語 ②

1. 診療科の名前 Names of medical departments

内科: internal medicine, 小児科: pediatrics, 外科: surgery, 整形外科: orthopedics, 眼科: ophthalmology,
耳鼻咽喉科: ENT, 皮膚科: dermatology, 泌尿器科: urology, 産婦人科: obstetrics/gynecology,
脳外科: brain surgery, 精神科: psychiatry, 歯科: dentistry

2. 病院的受付で使う言葉 At the hospital's reception desk

受付: reception, 保険証: health insurance card, 診察券: patient ID card, マイナンバーカード: My number card,
問診票: medical questionnaire, 診察代: examination fee

3. 検査、治療 Examinations and treatments

レントゲン: X-ray, CT スキャン: CT Scan, 血液検査: blood test, 尿検査: urine sample examination,
採血する: take a blood sample, 心電図: electrocardiogram (ECG), 視力検査: vision test

4. 薬局で使う言葉 At the pharmacy

処方箋: prescription, 薬剤師: pharmacist, カプセル: capsule, 錠剤: tablet, 粉薬: powdered medicine,
塗り薬: ointment, 目薬: eye drop, 抗生剤: antibiotics, 痛み止め: pain killer, 解熱剤: fever reducer,
睡眠薬: sleeping pill, アレルギーの薬: antihistamine, 胃薬: stomach medicine, 1日3回: 3 times a day,
朝晩2回: twice a day, morning and night, 眠前(寝る前): before sleeping, 食前(ご飯を食べる前): before a meal,
毎食後: after every meal, 5日分: for five days, 飲みます: take (medicine), 塗ります: apply (ointment),
さします: put in (eyedrops)

練習してみましょう。Let's practice!

① 受付で診察前 At the reception before the doctor's examination

患者: すみません。初めてなんですけど。Excuse me, this is my first visit.

受付: 保険証かマイナカードをお持ちですか。Do you have a health insurance card or My Number card?

患者: はい、あります。Here you are.

受付: では、この問診票に答えて、あちらでお待ちください。Then, please fill out this medical questionnaire and wait over there once you're finished.



② 薬局で At the pharmacy

薬剤師: お薬が3種類出ています。You have three types of medicine.

5日分、だしておきますので飲んでください。I've given you 5 days' worth, so please make sure to take it.

この白い錠剤は、アレルギーの薬です。1日1回寝る前に飲んでください。

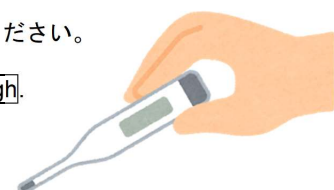
This white tablet is an anti-allergy drug. Please take it once daily, before you go to bed.

この白い粉薬は、胃薬です。1日3回、ご飯の後に飲んでください。

This white powdered medicine is for the stomach. Take it three times a day, after every meal.

この黄色いカプセルは解熱剤、熱を下げる薬です。熱が高いときに飲んでください。

This yellow capsule reduces fever. Take this when your temperature is high.



*上の薬局の所にある語彙に置き換えて練習してみましょう。

Replace the words in the boxes above and practice on your own.

Events & Memoranda

Living Together in Tokushima Festival 2025 とくしま共に生きるフェスタ 2025

To provide residents of Tokushima with an opportunity to deepen their understanding of respecting and protecting fundamental human rights, and to promote human rights awareness, we are holding the "Living Together in Tokushima Festival 2025." Admission and viewing are free!

Date & Time: Sat. November 29, 1:00-3:00 PM,
Sun. November 30, 10:00 AM-4:00 PM

Location: Tokushima Prefectural 21st Century Hall (Inside Bunka no Mori Park, Mukoterayama, Hachiman-cho, Tokushima City)

Content: Lecture on Nov. 30 by Attorney Yukio Kikuchi and others

Admission: Free (Advance registration required for the November 30 lecture)

For more details, scan the QR code to the right →
Other upcoming events:

- Human Rights Web Lecture Series, including video of the Nov. 30 Lecture (January 9-30, 2026)
- Street Corner Panel Exhibition across all prefectural municipalities (November 1, 2025-February 28, 2026 (planned))

広く県民の皆様に、基本的人権の尊重とその擁護について正しい理解を深める機会を提供するとともに、人権尊重思想の普及高揚を図るため、「とくしま共に生きるフェスタ2025」を開催します。どなたでも入場・視聴無料でお楽しみいただけますので、ぜひご参加ください。

日 時：11月29日（土）13:00～15:00

11月30日（日）10:00～16:00

場 所：徳島県立二十一世紀館（徳島市八万町向寺山 文化の森総合公園内）

内 容：講演会（11月30日）

講師：菊地 幸夫（弁護士）ほか

入場料：無料（30日の講演会は事前申込必要）

詳細はこちらのQRコード→

「とくしま共に生きるフェスタ2025」に続き、次の事業を開催します：

- ・ 動画配信「人権に関するWEB講演会及び30日の講演会のアーカイブ配信」（2026年1月9日～30日）
- ・ 県内3商業施設及び全市町村での「まちかどパネル展」（2025年11月1日～2026年2月28日（予定））



Entries Now Open for Tokushima Marathon 2026! 「とくしまマラソン2026」のエントリー受付が始まりました！

Entries are now open for the Tokushima Marathon 2026 to be held on Sunday, March 22, 2026. Please apply via the event homepage.

The application period runs until Sunday, November 30, 2025.

2026年3月22日（日）に開催される「とくしまマラソン2026」のエントリー受付が始まりました。エントリーは、大会ホームページよりお申し込みください。

申し込み期間は、2025年11月30日（日）までです。

■ Entry Page for Residents of Japan
Foreign residents in Japan should apply here (Google Translate can be used on the event homepage if you can't read Japanese.) →

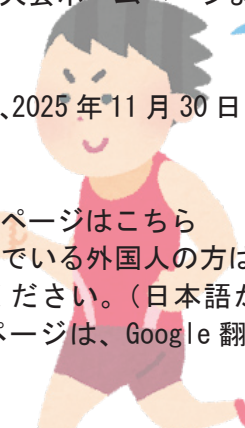
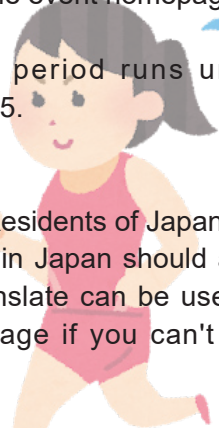


■ Entry Page for Overseas Runners
Foreign residents outside Japan should apply here →



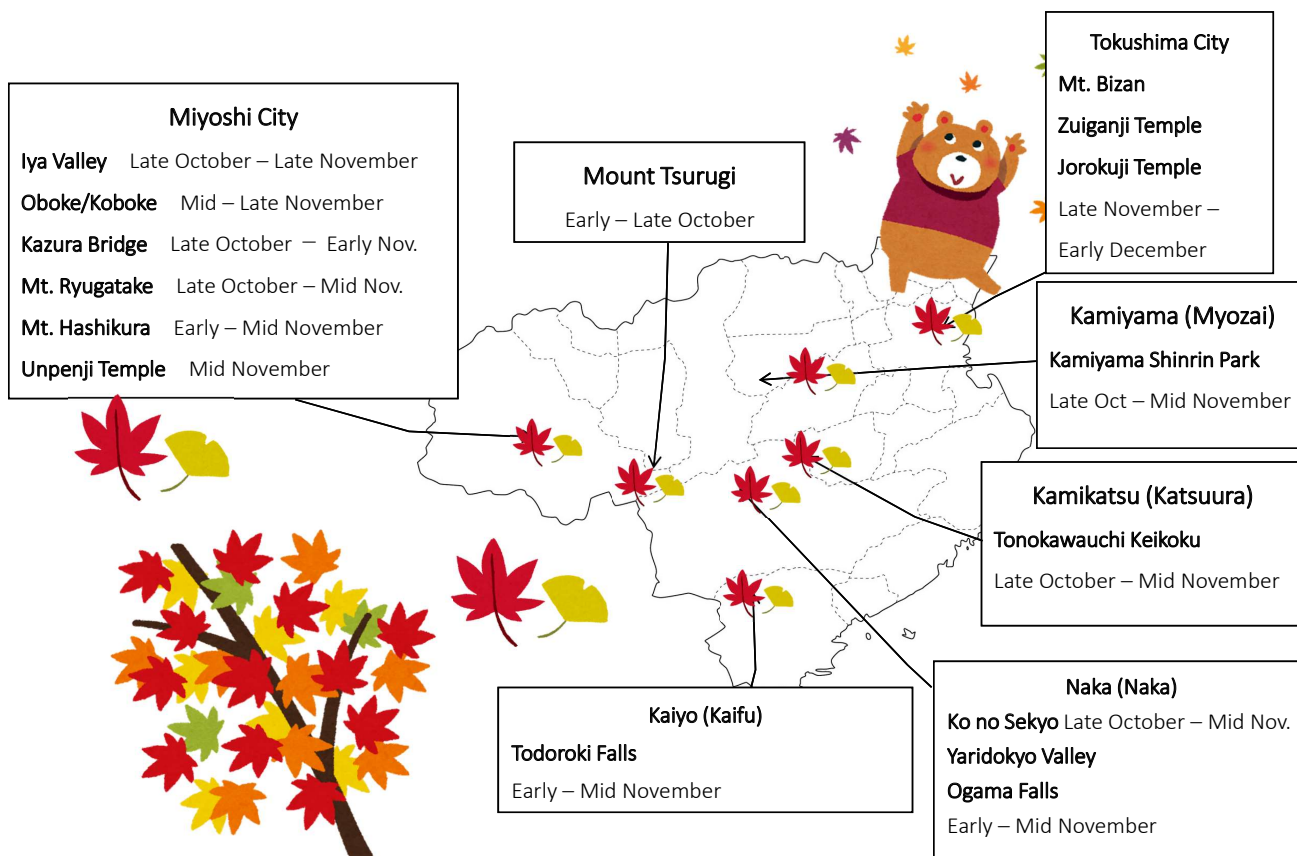
■ エントリーページはこちら
※日本に住んでいる外国人の方は、こちらからお申し込みください。（日本語が難しい場合、大会ホームページは、Google 翻訳が使用できます。） ←

■ 海外ランナーのエントリーページはこちら
※日本国外に住んでいる外国人の方は、こちらからお申し込みください。 ←



Events & Memoranda

Tokushima Fall Foliage Map 2025 徳島紅葉マップ 2025



Consultation Service at TOPIA・トピアの相談窓口

TOPIA provides consultation on everyday life, education, labor, medical institutions, and disaster prevention as well as 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. Consultation 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.

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

Vietnamese: Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, 10:00 - 14:00

Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays, 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)