

Prepare for the Nankai Trough Earthquake

On August 8, the Japan Meteorological Agency posted the "Nankai Trough Emergency Alert," right after the earthquake of a seismic intensity of 6-low in southern Miyazaki Prefecture, which occurred in the Hyuga-Nada Sea, between Kyushu and Shikoku. In Ehime Prefecture, where the government has announced that a massive earthquake in the Nankai Trough would cause huge damage, with about 16,000 deaths and over 240,000 buildings completely damaged, many residents checked their earthquake supplies and renewed their awareness of disaster prevention, but the sense of crisis varies according to region (people on the north coast of Shikoku, facing the Seto Inland Sea, aren't worried about tsunami) and age group (young people don't seem as concerned).

On August 15, the Agency ended its Nankai Trough Earthquake Emergency alert because no abnormal phenomena, such as a major earthquake, had been observed. They said this didn't mean that the fear of a massive earthquake had disappeared. The Minister of Disaster Management asked people to continue to check evacuation routes and stock up on emergency supplies while living their lives as usual. (August 10, 16, Ehime Shimbun)

Immersive Movie Theater Experience

Cinema Sunshine Co., Ltd., managing movie theaters inside and outside Ehime, installed "IMAX with Laser", a new projection system, at the Cinema Sunshine in Kinuyama, and "ScreenX", the newest tri-screen theater, at the Cinema Sunshine in Emiful Masaki. Both are the first in Shikoku.

The IMAX with Laser has a 4K laser light source, which increases the number of colors reproduced in high-resolution, making movies clearer and brighter with beautiful color contrast. The IMAX's next-generation 12-channel-surround sound system is also installed in the ceiling and in the walls on both sides. You feel more immersed in the movie by the powerful and high-density sound.

ScreenX is a panoramic film format which projects films on expanded, dual-sided, 270-degree screens. The "PREMIUM LARGE FORMAT" installed at the Cinema Sunshine in Emiful Masaki is the newest and features upgraded screens on both the front and side walls, resulting in brighter and sharper images by combining high-performance projectors.

(August 15, Ehime Shimbun Online)

Enjoy the Breathtaking Scenery of the Seto Inland Sea

Honshu-Shikoku Bridge Expressway Co., Ltd. is currently looking for participants to experience a tour which allows you to climb the main tower of the Kurushima-Kaikyo bridge (height: 180m), one of the bridges of the “Setouchi-Shimanami-Kaido” connecting Imabari, Ehime and Onomichi, Hiroshima Pref, overlooking the beautiful scenery of the Seto Inland Sea with its many islands.

The Kurushima-Kaikyo bridge is the collective term for triple suspension bridges, 4,105m long in total. There are six main towers supporting the bridges. On the tour, you will cruise to the Umashima island, and climb to the top of the tower by an elevator usually used for maintenance. You can enjoy the magnificent view from the top of the tower, usually a restricted area.

This tour has been offered since 2021, and is very popular. This year, 24 tours will be operated over the weekends from September 28 to December 8. There is a morning tour and an afternoon tour each day (with some exceptions). It starts from Shitadami-ko port in Oshima island and takes about 3 hours. The maximum number of participants for each tour is 30 on a first-come/first-serve basis. The participation fee is ¥7,500. The minimum number of participants to operate the tour is 8. Applications can be made through the website:

<https://imabari-shimanami.jp/touchou/> (only in Japanese)

(August 15, Asahi Shimbun Digital)

High Boarding Rates Lead to Increase in Flights from Korea

On August 7, Ehime Prefecture announced that the regular flights between Matsuyama and Busan, South Korea, by the Korean low-cost carrier Air Busan, will be increased from three round trips a week to six, excluding Mondays, from October 27. This Busan route is the only one in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions. The prefecture said that the carrier reviewed this route with its high average boarding rate of about 85%. The route began service last November.

According to a survey, the annual economic effect of three round trips a week is 1.570 billion yen, while six round trips a week will be 2.575 billion yen. Following the fact that the number of flights has doubled in less than a year since the service began, the governor stated that the prefecture would like to increase tourist destinations throughout the prefecture in order to attract regular visitors from Busan and the surrounding area with a population of 8 million.

On the other hand, the governor said that the number of Japanese passengers was less than 20% of the total. He encouraged the use of the

outbound route for business, taking advantage of the convenience of the increased number of flights, and sightseeing, including an international film festival and a fireworks display of about 80,000 fireworks in the fall.

(August 8, Ehime Shimbun)

Wheat Straws Made by the Disabled

REHAS Work Matsuyama, providing Support for Continuous Employment (type B) service, will start selling drinking straws made of wheat straw cultivated in Toon. It aims to contribute not only to the environment, but also to increase the salary of disabled employees and promote a local specialty of Ehime prefecture.

REHAS Work Matsuyama has been planning, brewing, and selling an original craft beer using local wheat.

A farmer suggested using wheat straw for drinking straws to Mr. Semba, a representative of the REHAS Work Matsuyama. Mr. Semba was very positive from the first and hoped to introduce these wonderful and eco-friendly straws which were used in the past but forgotten with the spread of plastic straws.

REHAS Work Matsuyama works with J Wing Farm, an agricultural organization located in Toon, and produces wheat straws made by the wheat organically grown and harvested by hand. The stems are cut into an appropriate length, heat-treated at 70C for three hours, and sterilized by alcohol. It is a bit narrower than a usual plastic straw.

The price for 80 straws will be ¥600 for the 17cm size, and ¥800 for 21cm. They will be available at several cafés in the prefecture. Mr. Semba said that it would highlight an attractive point of Ehime and be a novelty for tourists. In addition, he likes the idea that they are made of eco-friendly material.

Support for Continuous Employment (Type B) provides job opportunities and training for the disabled, but the problem of low wages is also a challenge.

(August 6, Asahi Shimbun Digital)

Paris Olympics Bronze Medalist from Matsuyama

Hideki Matsuyama, from Matsuyama City, won the bronze medal at the Paris Olympics, which made him the first Japanese medalist in men's golf. He also became the 10th Summer Olympic medalist from Ehime.

About 20 of his family members and acquaintances watched the tournament on TV at the golf practice facility "HIDEKI GOLF GARDEN" in Matsuyama. When he was assured of getting the bronze medal in the

early hours of August 5, the facility was filled with loud applause. His father recalled the Tokyo Olympics, where he placed 4th after a playoff, saying, "I feel like all the regret three years ago has been cleared up at once." His fans in the prefecture have already expressed their expectations for his gold medal four years from now.

(August 5, Ehime Shimbun Online)