

Photo Exhibition to Think about Coexistence

A photo exhibition, "Israel and Palestine from a Documentary Photographer's Perspective" is being held at the Ehime University Museum until July 26. It displays approximately 240 photographs taken by Yuichi Mori for a total of three months between 2018 and 2025. He is a documentary photographer from Kagawa Prefecture who lives in Tokyo aged 40. The exhibition conveys the daily life of Israelis and Palestinians, connected by enlarged panels showing photos of the separation wall and checkpoints.

On June 14, a gallery tour and discussion were held focusing on seeking a way to coexist. Mr. Mori said, "Some Israelis engage in terrible persecution of Palestinians, while others are trying to exchange with and support Palestinians. I hope that visitors will recognize aspects of the real world that cannot be simplified and think about what coexistence means."

The exhibition is open from 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with last admission at 4:00 p.m. Closed on Sundays and holidays. Admission is free.
(June 15, Ehime Shimbun)

Baby! Baby! Baby!! At Tobe Zoo

Many babies were born one after another at Tobe Zoo.

Ito, a baby southern tamandua (a kind of anteater) born in January, has a whitish body. She is growing up healthy and strong with her mother, Tsumu. She could be seen in public from May 20. The baby has a habit of riding on its mother's back when she is moving.

Three red kangaroo babies were found in each of their mother's pouches in April and May. Paprika, Peman's baby, is full of curiosity. She sometimes takes a nap close to the fence poles and runs around energetically. Mr. Yuki Matsumura, a zoo manager, said that he would like people to enjoy seeing the baby's face in her mom's pouch, which can make you feel as if you were traveling to Australia without a passport.

A four-toed hedgehog baby that is appreciated also as a pet was born April 27. Haku gave birth to six babies, but only two are growing healthily at the moment. Ms. Moe Satonaga, another zoo manager, said that she would like to enjoy babies' growth with the visitors.

A hamadryas baboon baby was born on May 18. The baby is clinging on Sualju, the mother, and busy looking around. Other members of the group are helping with her childcare. Baby hamadryas baboons have brown hair and it turns grey when it becomes an adult.

A tufted capuchin baby was born June 1. Two six-banded armadillo babies have been in public since June 3.

Mr. Kyoji Morisada, in charge of public relations, said that the time when babies could be seen was only now, so come to see them!
(June 8, Yomiuri Shimbun Online)

Average Amount of Summer Bonus

The Iyogin Regional Economy Research Center Inc. announced the result of survey about the summer bonus among the enterprises in the prefecture. It is expected that the average amount will be ¥407,000, which is a 1.0% increase compared with the last year's.

The questionnaires were sent out to 841 companies in Ehime in April and May, and 309 valid responses were received (36.7%).

The average amount of the 2025 summer bonus will be ¥590,000 in the manufacturing industry (-1.4% in comparison with 2024), ¥368,000 in the non-manufacturing industry (+1.8%). 52.7% of the enterprises will increase, 31.4% will be flat, and 15.9% will decrease.

The reasons for the increase are to motivate employees (49.0%), to reflect cost of living increases and inflation (41.8%), and employee retention (22.2%). The biggest reason for the decreases was unsatisfactory performance.

Mr. Kazunari Yano, the president of IRC said that it was found that there was a cooperate effort to increase the summer bonus, and also that it was to offset increased prices and to promote employee retention.
(June 7, Asahi Shimbun Digital)

High Tendency of Young People to Return to Shikoku

According to a survey on "Corporate Involvement in Education" released on April 29 by the Shikoku Economic Federation and other groups, about 40% of young people want to return to their hometowns someday though they hope to go on to higher education outside the prefecture after high school. 11643 second year students of high schools in the Shikoku region were polled. The survey found that more than 70% of the high school students hope to go on to higher education, and of them more than half hope to study outside of their prefecture. Among those wishing to go on to higher education outside of the prefecture, 1.9% said they "want to continue to live" in their hometown, 37.9% said they "want to return to live in their hometowns even if they leave the prefecture once," and 32.5% said they "do not want to live in their hometowns."

When asked if there are companies in their hometowns where they would like to work, nearly half of all respondents answered "not sure," while 36.8% said "yes. Out of those who answered "yes," the high proportion of 67.0% have the intention of staying in or returning to their hometowns.

As the outflow of young people from the region is considered one of the factors contributing to the population decline in Shikoku, the federation asks for the local businesses to be actively involved in career education, with the hope that having an image of working in the region may encourage young people to live there in the future. The federation also interviewed 147 member companies about the current status of corporate career education. A common concern was the lack of human resources and the large burden involved in such activities as work experience and lectures to high school students. The survey conductor

also asked the national government for financial and personnel support to provide young people career education.

(May 30, Ehime Shimbun)

The Number of Tourists to Matsuyama

Matsuyama city announced that the city received 6,003,900 tourists in 2024, which is an 8.1% increase compared with 2023. It is the first time after the pandemic of COVID-19 to exceed 6 million, which was 6,153,300. The reasons are considered to be the resumption and increase of international flights at Matsuyama Airport, and the complete opening of Dogo Onsen Honkan in July last year after a 5-year renovation project.

Since 1964 Matsuyama city has been compiling the number of passengers on public transportation and guests at hotels to estimate the number of visitors to the city.

The estimated number of foreign visitors showed a remarkable growth. It was 535,300 (+147.7% compared with last year), which is the most since the research started. There were 289,300 from Korea (+234.8%) and 131,200 from Taiwan (+129.4%). It was understood that the increase of the flights to Seoul and Busan and the resumption of the flight to Taipei contributed to this significant growth.

The city announced the number of visitors at tourism attractions as well. The number of people taking a bath at Dogo Onsen Honkan, Tsubaki no yu, and Asuka no yu was 929,484 (+20.5% compared with last year). The number of visitors to Matsuyama castle tower was 497,511 (+7.8%). The reason why the increase in visitors to the castle was limited is considered to be due to the closed days when the landslide occurred in July last year.

(May 30, Asahi Shimbun Digital)

Simple Japanese for International People Visiting Hospitals

More foreigners have come to live in Ehime, with the acceptance of foreign human resources through technical internships and specific skills systems. According to the Immigration Services Agency, the number of foreign residents in Ehime was 18,687 at the end of 2024, an increase of 14 % from the previous year. This accounts for about 1.5 % of the population of the prefecture. The most common nationalities are Vietnamese, Filipino, Chinese, and Indonesian, many of whom are not native English speakers.

There are various problems that they face while living in the region, many of which are related to medical care. Tomoko Onoe, a lecturer at the Ehime Prefectural University of Health Sciences points out, "Foreigners face language and psychological barriers and often won't visit medical institutions until their condition becomes serious." She has been holding seminars for nursing instructors and medical professionals since 2023 to discuss communication in the medical field and simple Japanese, which is a communication method that is

characterized by being clear and concise so that everyone can understand. She said, “If we take the perspective of living in the same community, it will also be beneficial not only for foreigners, but also the elderly, children, and people with disabilities, and will be a tool to help create a society where everyone can live comfortably.”

(May 26, Ehime Shimbun)