

## **Bringing Together Drama Producers from Around Asia**

The 17th Asian TV Drama Conference was held in Matsuyama from February 12 to 14. About 350 participants from various countries, mainly from Japan and Korea, shared the latest information and discussed issues through examples of video content. It involved presentations by producers and screenwriters as well as business matching.

Some of the participants reported on a joint drama project between Japan and Singapore that was sparked by an encounter at this international conference.

The conference was first held in 2006 with the aim of spreading culture from Asia to the world. This was the third time it has been held in Japan, and was organized by the General Incorporated Association called ATDC and Matsuyama city.

A tour of potential filming locations within Matsuyama also took place, via Dogo Onsen Main Building, Matsuyama Castle, and Ishiteji Temple.

Deputy Mayor of Matsuyama mentioned the culture and tourist spots in the city and said, "Our culture and attractions have an affinity with drama production. We hope to be a partner who supports all of you producers."

(February 13, Ehime Shimbun)

## **Casualty Evacuation Drill Implemented**

Casualty by earthquake evacuation drill was conducted at the JR Matsuyama station. International students at Ehime university were invited to play a role of the injured to confirm the procedure to rescue increasing foreign tourists. The drill was held on the assumption that four foreigners fall and are injured at the station due to the earthquake. The station attendants coming to rescue them used a translation app to ask about bleeding and pain, and called for an ambulance.

The emergency medical technicians transported the injured one by one on a stretcher, and asked about their condition using multilanguage boards.

According to the Japan Tourism Agency, the number of foreigners spending a night in the prefecture in 2024 was 452,000, which was twice the previous year. As for 2025, it increased to more than 520,000 as of November. How to care for and treat foreigners at the time of a disaster has become a critical challenge.

Mr. Tomoomi Kato, Deputy Chief of the Central Fire Station said that a

practical drill like this was very much needed to understand the injured person's condition accurately even if a different language used, since JR Matsuyama station is a transportation hub which foreign tourists often use.

(February 6, Asahi Shimbun Digital)

## **Operating Evacuation Shelters While Respecting Cultural Differences**

A disaster prevention workshop was held in Matsuyama on February 1. 21 foreign participants, primarily Ehime University international students, along with 10 Japanese participants, held the workshop in groups, considering how evacuation shelters should be run while taking cultural differences into account. The group discussions were led by foreign residents.

The event was organized by the NPO Matsuyama Sakanoue Japanese Language School and supervised by Associate Professor Genta Nakano of the Kyoto University Disaster Prevention Research Institute, with funding from the Cabinet Office. The aim was to improve local disaster response capabilities by encouraging foreigners, who are often on the receiving end of support, to take the lead in disaster prevention efforts.

Participants tried to transcend language and cultural differences and tackled questions that were difficult to answer clearly. For example, some people want to place the body of their family who died in a disaster at evacuation shelter and hold a ceremony for them. To this issue, the discussion was like, "We cannot allow the bodies to be brought in due to the risk of a deterioration in sanitary conditions." "Perhaps it would be better to consider placing the bodies in a location separate from where evacuees are resting," etc.

Another question is: some people prefer wearing their shoes inside the gymnasium of an evacuation shelter rather than taking them off. After much discussion, a compromise beyond the binary options of yes or no was proposed: making makeshift slippers out of newspaper. Then the participants shared how to make ones.

They also discussed whether to provide Muslims with box meals using pork at evacuation centers.

One high school student participant said, "I realized that it's important to listen to what foreigners have to say, rather than to imagine what they think."

(February 3, Ehime Shimbun)

## **Offering Election Discount**

An approach that voting benefits you by getting a discount or earning points at restaurants, beauty salons and etc. has been widespread all over Japan. There are some enterprises even in Ehime which have introduced the service as a social contribution.

YNQ Co., Ltd. located in Niihama that operates pawn shops, secondhand golf shops and more came up with a slogan "Let's make the turnout in Ehime the highest in Japan". A discount campaign is currently in progress until March 8 at Shichiya Kanteikyoku (a pawn shop), Golf Do! (a secondhand golf shop), and Funky Time (a Internet café). You need to register on the official LINE account and show the shop staff a photo to prove that you went to vote. And then a coupon for a five to ten percent discount will be offered at the shop.

This is the second campaign running after the House of Councilors election 2025. Mr. Tomoki Manabe, the president of SYNQ Co., Ltd., expected that this campaign encouraged people to go to vote, and said that he would be very glad to see happy customers with their discount offered.

The Kaiei Ryokan group located in Aichi and operating ryokan inns and hotels all over Japan offers a 30% discount on the accommodation fee at the Okudogo Ichiyumomori in Matsuyama, and Hotel Ajour Shionomaru in Imabari only for weekdays until February 27 to people who voted. A photo to prove that you went to vote or a vote certificate issued by the local government should be presented at check-in. Accommodations not only in Ehime but also Aichi and Mie offer the same type of discount.

(February 3, Ehime Shimbun Online)

## **Naming rights for Space on Ehime the University Campus**

Ehime University has decided on the name "Toyota Corolla Ehime Mirai LAB" for a room dedicated to regional sustainability on its Johoku Campus and has signed a naming rights partnership agreement with Toyota Corolla Ehime. An unveiling ceremony was held on January 28.

According to Ehime University, the agreement will last for five years, from December 1, 2025 to November 30, 2030, and the naming rights fee has not been revealed. Along with "Collaboration House Hall" and "NP Regional

Exchange Room" on the same campus, decided on last spring, all three names were collected from the businesses from November 2024. Proceeds from the naming rights partnership project will be used to improve the educational and research environment.

The facility aims to support exchanges and expand new possibilities for students, and is also open to local residents.

Toyota Corolla Ehime has also begun a trial run of a car sharing service for a fee exclusively for students and faculty. A five-seater hybrid car, Aqua, is placed on the Johoku Campus and is intended to be used primarily for transportation between Ehime University campuses and its facilities. Using Toyota Motor Corporation's car sharing service, reservations and use can be made 24 hours a day, and the car can be unlocked and locked using a smartphone.

(January 29, Ehime Shimbun)

## **The Second Most Users of Matsuyama Airport in 2024**

Ehime prefecture announced that the number of people using the Matsuyama airport in the fiscal year 2024 was 3,070,443 (+9.8% in comparison with last year), which was the second highest since the airport opened in 1956. The number of international passengers was the most at 321,979, 2.4 times more than last year.

According to the Aviation Policy Division in the prefecture, the number of domestic passengers was 2,748,464 (+3.3% in comparison with last year). The flight to/from Naha was 91,086 and has set a new record as the result of aggressive promotion on TV and SNS.

As for the international flights, the number of passengers on the flight to/from Seoul grew to 204,835 which became more than double than last year since the number of flights increased from 12 to 14 a week since October 2024. The frequency of flights to Taipei also increased from two to three a week since October 2024, and the number of passengers was 44,104, about 11.5 times more than last year. The number of passengers to Busan, with the frequency of the flights changing occasionally between three and six, was 71,660, about 3.2 times more than last year. The average load factor of all international flights was strong at 86.2%.

The highest number of people using Matsuyama airport was in 2018, at 3,124,467. The person in charge in the prefecture Aviation Policy Department

says that the numbers for both international and domestic seem favorable in fiscal year 2025 so far, and expects that it might be the highest at the end of this year.

(Asahi Shimbun Digital, January 21)