



FOREIGN PRESS CENTER JAPAN

ANNUAL REPORT
2015-2016

ENGLISH / 英語



40 Years with Foreign Media

Building Bridges between Japan and the World



Since its establishment in 1976, the Foreign Press Center Japan (FPCJ) has been helping reporters from foreign media organizations cover Japan in order to promote the understanding of Japan in other countries. There are currently 480 reporters affiliated with 171 media organizations from 32 countries and regions working in Japan (data gathered by the FPCJ as of February 2016). Many journalists from foreign media organizations also visit Japan to research stories. The FPCJ will continue to facilitate reporting by foreign media in Japan, and use the unique network we have developed over the years to help build bridges between the people of Japan and the foreign media.

"Helping to Build a Better World by Spreading Japanese Knowledge"

2016 is the 40th anniversary of Foreign Press Center Japan (FPCJ). We appreciate your kind support over the 40 years.

Japan has changed dramatically over the last 40 years. After the period of high economic growth and bursting of the economic bubble that followed, we are now faced with challenges such as a super-aged society and decreasing population. The FPCJ has always helped show the real Japan to the world by supporting foreign media.

The number of foreign tourists has grown recently, and there are big events coming to Japan such as the Rugby World Cup 2019 and 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. However, the quantity and quality of information transmitted from Japan is not sufficient, because of a decline in the numbers of the foreign correspondents, as well as a lack of people who can properly disseminate information from Japan especially in the fields of politics, economics, society and culture.

The FPCJ will continue to work with the goal of helping to build a better world, by contributing to the spread of Japanese knowledge. We ask for your continued support.

Kiyotaka Akasaka

President, Foreign Press Center Japan

Our Activities in 2015-2016

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Opportunities to Learn More About Japan

Press Briefings

Briefings by leading experts and senior government officials including Cabinet ministers can help foreign journalists better understand the context of news in Japan. Themes range from politics, economics, and diplomacy, to the environment, energy, science, society and culture. Press briefings are held about four times a month, with 30 attendees on average. Videos of briefings are also uploaded to the FPCJ website afterwards.



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Opportunities to Cover Newsworthy Subjects Throughout Japan

Press Tours

Press tours provide opportunities to visit different areas around Japan and cover topics such as local industries and social issues. As foreign journalists are generally based in Tokyo, these tours provide a rare chance to cover other areas of Japan. There are 10–15 tours held a year, usually with 10–15 journalists on each tour. Tours are planned and sponsored by the FPCJ, or carried out on commission from local governments and other organizations.



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Japan Covered by Leading Journalists

Fellowship Programs

In order for journalists based in foreign countries to visit and report on Japan, the FPCJ operates fellowship programs that invite leading journalists to cover stories firsthand throughout Japan. In addition to our own fellowship programs, the FPCJ also provides support for planning and operating programs by other organizations. Itineraries are determined based on the interests of the journalists and on current situations in Japan.



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A Reliable Partner for Foreign Media

Assistance for Reporting

When covering stories in Japan, many members of the foreign media encounter issues with the language barrier and cultural differences. Journalists often tell us that even if they have decided on a topic, it can be difficult to find interviewees or to make appointments. Journalists in Japan and abroad can contact the FPCJ for help with these kinds of problems at any time using our website, and we provide assistance to ensure reporting goes smoothly.



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Distributing Information to Foreign Media

International PR Support Program

Organizations would often like to be covered in the international media, but are unaware how to make it happen—the FPCJ responds to this issue by providing support for distributing information overseas to local governments, businesses, and universities throughout Japan. Looking into what little-known features of Japan in that area might attract the interest of the foreign media, we will provide the organization with advice depending on the situation.



Our Activities in 2015-2016

01 Opportunities to Learn More About Japan

Press Briefings



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Photo: Press Briefing by Mr. Kiyoyuki Seguchi, Research Director, the Canon Institute for Global Studies (April 2015)

Briefings in 2015-2016

Establishment of the Japan Sports Agency, and New Government Sports Administration

November 2015 Dr. Daichi Suzuki, Japan Sports Agency Commissioner

With the establishment of the Japan Sports Agency on October 1, 2015 to manage government administration of sports in Japan, the FPCJ hosted a briefing with the Japan Sports Agency's first Commissioner, Dr. Daichi Suzuki. Commissioner Suzuki mentioned four main goals of the Japan Sports Agency: 1) Improving health through sports, 2) Increasing Japan's international competitiveness, 3) Increasing Japan's international status, and 4) Stimulating the economy and rural areas with sports. He also stated his determination to cooperate with the sports community to create projects to train the next generation of athletes, and a plan to expand sports-related businesses. Questions during the Q&A session included what the commissioner believed was necessary to improve Japanese athletes' international competitiveness.



Work-Life Balance Will Change Japanese Society

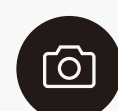
August 2015 Ms. Yoshie Komuro, President of Work-Life Balance Co., Ltd.

Just ahead of the World Assembly for Women in Tokyo (WAW! 2015, hosted by the Government of Japan), the FPCJ invited Ms. Yoshie Komuro, President of Work-Life Balance Co., Ltd., to speak about the current state of work-life balance in Japan, its issues, and proposals for improvements. Ms. Komuro, who has provided consultation services to over 900 companies to create highly productive organizations, pointed out that Japan has some of the world's longest working hours, but low levels of productivity, which results in a negative spiral. She also mentioned how setting a limit on working hours could help improve national productivity and be effective in dealing with the declining birth rate, while providing examples of companies and of actions by government.



Results in 2015-2016

 **58** Briefings

 **1680** Participants

 **365** Reports

02 Opportunities to Cover Newsworthy Subjects Throughout Japan

Press Tours



Press tours provide opportunities for foreign media to visit different areas around Japan and cover topics such as local industries, social issues, culture, and traditional craftsmanship. As foreign journalists are generally based in Tokyo, these tours provide a rare chance to cover other areas of Japan. There are 10-15 tours held a year, usually with 10-15 journalists on each tour. In addition to tours planned and sponsored by the FPCJ, there are also tours carried out on commission from local governments and other organizations.

Photo: Press Tour to Kitakyushu City "The Front Line of the Future of Energy Use in Japan" (March 2016)

Tours in 2015-2016

70 Years After the War: Hiroshima Press Tour, Nagasaki Press Tour

July 2015 Hiroshima: 203 reports / Nagasaki: 179 reports

With 2015 marking 70 years since the end of World War II, press tours were held to both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The journalists interviewed the mayors of both cities, atomic bomb survivors, and residents working to pass on the memories of the bombings. In Hiroshima, the tour covered the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, the Atomic Bomb Dome, streetcars that survived the bombing still in use today, and high school peace ambassadors. The tour also visited local businesses which have developed along with Hiroshima since the war, including Mazda Motor Corporation and Otafuku Sauce, which makes sauce for the local specialty okonomiyaki. In Nagasaki, the tour interviewed students fighting for the abolishment of nuclear weapons, and visited the Nagasaki University Atomic Bomb Disease Institute, which performs research on the effects of radiation on health and applies the results to treatment and training. The tour also visited the Huis Ten Bosch Henn-na Hotel, which incorporates robots and other advanced technology, before it opened to the public.



Iwate Prefecture Coastal Area Press Tour "The Fifth Year of Recovery"

March 2016 143 reports

This press tour visited Otsuchi and Miyako in Iwate to cover the progress of recovery in the coastal area of the prefecture, five years after the Great East Japan Earthquake. In Otsuchi, the tour interviewed residents of temporary housing, people working to support children's education, and the mayor of Otsuchi. In Miyako, they interviewed storeowners in the Taro-chan House temporary shopping center and residents who rebuilt their homes on higher ground about their feelings now, five years after the earthquake.



Results in 2015-2016

 **18** Tours

 **19** Countries and Regions

 **178** Reporters

 **796** Reports

03 Japan Covered by Leading Journalists Fellowship Programs



Photo: Canadian sumo wrestler interviewed by CBC/Radio-Canada Montreal reporter (August-September 2015)

In order for journalists based in foreign countries to visit and report on Japan, the FPCJ operates fellowship programs that invite leading journalists from around the world to cover stories firsthand throughout Japan. These programs last one to two weeks. In addition to our own fellowship programs, the FPCJ also provides support for planning and operating programs by other organizations. Itineraries are determined based on the interests of the journalists and on current situations in Japan, with the FPCJ making appointments, arranging interpreters, transportation and accommodation. FPCJ staff may accompany journalists, ensuring that the needs of program participants can be met.

Programs in 2015-2016

Japanese Foreign and Security Policy 70 Years After World War II

October 2015 Fellowship Program U.S. / *The Diplomat* / Ms. Shannon Tiezzi

Ms. Shannon Tiezzi, Managing Editor for *The Diplomat* (an online magazine that covers current affairs in the Asia-Pacific), visited Japan for ten days to cover two topics: Japanese foreign and security policy, and overcoming historical issues on the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. In Tokyo, she interviewed government officials and experts over new developments such as the passage of the security bills, and the Japanese response to China's maritime expansion. She also visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, and went to Okinawa to hear from local residents and officials about the U.S. military base relocation issue.



Japan's Coexistence with the Sea: Reporting on the Recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake

September 2015 Fellowship Program for Asian Journalists

Six journalists from the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Maldives

This program invited journalists from Asian countries at risk of tsunamis and storm surges to cover Japanese initiatives in disaster prevention over the course of ten days. In areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, the journalists learned about locally-led efforts to build towns resistant to disasters and disaster awareness education to pass on the lessons from the disaster. In Tokyo, the program participants attended briefings by government officials and visited NHK to cover the role of the media in disaster prevention and reduction. The journalists appreciated the opportunity to cover disaster prevention techniques with potential in their home countries, and released numerous stories about the current state of disaster prevention in their own countries.



*This project was carried out by the FPCJ with support from the Nippon Foundation and the Toshiba International Foundation

Results in 2015-2016

 **30** Countries and Regions

China/Indonesia/Malaysia/Philippines/Vietnam/Nepal/Thailand/India/Sri Lanka/Maldives/Australia/New Zealand/Fiji/Samoa/Papua New Guinea/Tonga/Palau/Micronesia/Marshall Islands/United States/Canada/Argentina/Mexico/United Kingdom/Germany/Spain/Finland/France/Switzerland/Russia

 **60** Reporters

 **210** Reports

04 A Reliable Partner for Foreign Media Assistance for Reporting



Photo: Journalist interviewing an atomic bomb survivor in Nagasaki (July 2015)

When covering stories in Japan, many members of the foreign media encounter issues with the language barrier and cultural differences. Journalists often tell us that even if they have decided on a topic, it can be difficult to find interviewees and their contact information, or to make appointments. Journalists in Japan and abroad can contact the FPCJ for help with these kinds of problems at any time using our website. After determining what kind of people the journalist would like to interview, and what visuals they are interested in, the FPCJ provides assistance to ensure reporting goes smoothly. In 2015-2016, requests for reporting assistance covered a range of topics, including the 70th anniversary of the end of WWII, the decreasing birth rate and aging population, robots, and nuclear energy policy.

Examples from 2015-2016

MBC TV (South Korea) Mr. Lee Jangsik

In response to a request for assistance reporting on how Japan was dealing with agriculture issues shared with South Korea, such as decreasing rice consumption and the rising age of agricultural workers, arrangements were made in cooperation with Niigata City with local agricultural businesses including farms and sake breweries. The report included an interview with a rice farmer, who grows 20 other types of fruits and vegetables in addition to rice to ensure a stable income. The report also covered rice farmers and sake breweries taking advantage of the boom in Japanese cuisine to enter foreign markets, and new agricultural initiatives in the Niigata "Agricultural Special Zone," such as collaborations between farmers and corporations.



De Standaard (Belgium) Mr. Nico Tanghe

To assist with reporting on the topic of why robots are accepted in Japanese society, the FPCJ arranged a visit to an equipment manufacturer using robots for labor and an interview with Osaka University Professor Hiroshi Ishiguro, a leader in the field of humanoid robot research. Leading with a memorable photo of Professor Ishiguro and a robot that looks just like him, the article reported on how Japan is incorporating robots more actively than in the West. Another article titled "A visit to the factory of the future" covered a factory where 19 robots work alongside humans. It has lower productivity but is comparatively inexpensive, and the article notes that the Japanese government is promoting the use of industrial robots.



Results in 2015-2016

 **33** Countries and Regions

China/Hong Kong/Taiwan/South Korea/Singapore/Philippines/Vietnam/India/Kazakhstan/United Kingdom/France/Germany/Italy/Spain/Switzerland/Austria/Belgium/Sweden/Denmark/Finland/Holland/Estonia/Poland/Slovenia/Hungary/Russia/United States/Canada/Argentina/Venezuela/New Zealand/United Arab Emirates/Qatar

 **226** Reporting Arrangements & Provision of Information

 **115** Reports

Our Activities in 2015-2016

05 Distributing Information to Foreign Media International PR Support Program



Photo: Symposium on universities and regional vitalization (January 2016)

Organizations would often like to be covered in the international media, but are unaware how to make it happen—the FPCJ responds to this issue by providing support for distributing information overseas to local governments, businesses, and universities throughout Japan, from Hokkaido to Okinawa. Looking into what little-known features of Japan in that area might attract the interest of the foreign media, FPCJ staff will provide the organization with face-to-face advice. Depending on the situation, a variety of services are also available such as press releases targeting foreign correspondents located in Tokyo, management support for planning coverage of regional events, and rentals of the FPCJ conference room.

Programs in 2015-2016

Seminar for Local Governments: Press Releases That Lead to Coverage

With the goal of regional vitalization, local governments are being encouraged to increase overseas promotion. To this end, the FPCJ's press release service is one option, but even if a press release is sent out it does not always lead to events being covered. To improve this situation, a workshop was held to teach how to write press releases that appeal to foreign media, with FPCJ staff as coordinators. A journalist from Deutsche Presse-Agentur gave a talk on what topics he'd like to cover in regional Japan, as well as the group studying every aspect of making press releases, from deciding on a title to what key points to include in the release. Members of the PR sections of 12 local governments participated, and commented that the seminar would help them when making press releases in the future.



Support for Event at Oita Prefecture Restaurant in Tokyo

The FPCJ also helped plan and organize a pre-event before the two Oita press tours held in 2015-2016, in which members of the foreign media and embassy officials were invited to a lunch at Zarai Oita (located in Ginza, Tokyo), a restaurant serving Oita cuisine with ingredients from Oita. While listening to officials from Oita prefecture, the participants could sample Oita delicacies, making it an excellent opportunity to promote the prefecture even from Tokyo. The event had a total of 60 participants, with journalists from Bangladesh, Canada, China, France, Lebanon, South Korea, the U.K., and the U.S., and embassy officials from 15 countries.



Results in 2015-2016

34 Organizations

322 Press Releases

56 Room Rentals



G7 Ise-Shima Summit U.S. President Obama Visits Hiroshima

On May 26 and 27, the G7 Summit is held at Kashikojima in Shima, Mie. On May 27, President Obama becomes the first U.S. president to visit Hiroshima while in office

2016 40th ANNIVERSARY

Great East Japan Earthquake Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Disaster

On March 11, a magnitude 9.0 earthquake occurs off the Pacific Coast of Tohoku. With coastal regions devastated by tsunamis, there were more than 18000 people dead or missing. A hydrogen explosion also occurs at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, which had been damaged by the earthquake and tsunamis

2011



FIFA World Cup Hosted by Japan and South Korea

Soccer World Cup held from May 31 to June 30. The final game is held at International Stadium Yokohama, with Brazil coming out on top over Germany

2002

Return of Abductees

On October 15, five victims of abduction by North Korea return to Japan

Koshiba and Tanaka Both Win the Nobel Prize

Masatoshi Koshiba wins the Nobel Prize for Physics, and Koichi Tanaka wins the Nobel Prize for Chemistry

Democratic Party of Japan wins House of Representatives election; ruling party changes

World Exposition, Aichi (Theme: Nature's Wisdom)

G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit (Prime Minister: Yoshiro Mori)

1998 Nagano Winter Olympics and Paralympics

The Nagano Olympics start on February 7. With athletes from over 70 countries and regions, Japan wins the gold medal for men's team large hill ski jumping

Major Japanese trading firm, Yamaichi Securities Co., Ltd., ceases operations

Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake

1995

On January 17, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake occurs with its epicenter under the northern part of Awaji Island. Over 6,400 people lost their lives due to fires and collapsed buildings



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Subway Sarin Attack

On March 20, the Aum Shinrikyo cult releases the deadly poison sarin in Tokyo subways. There were 13 deaths and over 6,300 people harmed

Marriage of His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito



On June 9, wedding ceremony of H.I.H. Crown Prince Naruhito and Masako Owada held at the Imperial Palace

©Nikkan Sports / AFLO

1989 Emperor Showa Passes Away, Start of Heisei Era

On January 7, Emperor Showa passes away, and the new era name of Heisei is announced



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1985 Japan Airlines Crash

On August 12, a Japan Airlines jumbo jet crashes near Mount Osutaka in Gunma prefecture. There were 4 survivors of this tragic accident, and 520 deaths

Opening of the Tohoku Shinkansen and Joetsu Shinkansen

1982

1979 Tokyo Summit (Prime Minister: Masayoshi Ohira)

1976 Lockheed Scandal

Former Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka arrested by the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office on July 27, regarding the purchase of Lockheed passenger planes by ANA



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40 YEARS

1976-2016

through Correspondents' Eyes

40 years have passed since the founding of the FPCJ. Over the years, what kind of Japanese news have foreign correspondents reported on? Here is a look back, along with photographs from correspondents.