

THE NMUN KOBE TIMES



Kobe City University of Foreign Studies

Kobe Welcomes Over 300 NMUN Delegates and Teachers from Overseas



The delegates from overseas and KCUFS student volunteers pose for a group photo in front of Hama-Fuku-Tsuru Ginjo Studio in Nada, Kobe.

From Italy, Germany, the Czech Republic, Russia, Slovenia, the US, Canada and Chile, as well as the Philippines and China, some 270 delegates have arrived in Kobe. And together with 60 delegates from across Japan, making a total of 330, they will join the National Model United Nations (NMUN) to be held for the first time in this country, representing 63 designated countries as diplomats in a mock conference; yet, they will cope with actual international problems through discussions and negotiations. The delegates consist of university students from 28 universities and seven consortiums from the 11 countries.

Most of the sessions in the four-day conference will take place at Kobe International

Conference Center following a UN Forum, and the opening ceremony and the first session will be held on Nov. 23 at the Kobe City University of Foreign Studies (KCUFS). Of the seven sessions held by four UN organizations—the General Assembly (GA), High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Security Council and Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the final session of ECOSOC on Nov. 26, Saturday, will take place at the Kobe City Hall Chambers in the presence of 140 people, including 50 people who were selected from the general public in a drawing, 20 local high school students and Kobe City Assembly members.

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Participants from overseas started to arrive in Kobe late Saturday, and continued to arrive throughout the day on Sunday. They were greeted by KCUFS students who are members of the organizing committee at the nearby airports—both Itami Airport and Kansai International Airport—where they received directions to their hotels. After their arrival, around a hundred delegates went on a sightseeing tour of Kobe.

Participants in a tour that started early afternoon on Sunday gathered at Kobe Portopia Hotel, one of the hotels where they are to stay. They first visited the Disaster Reduction and Human Renovation Institution (DRI) near Sannomiya, the city’s commercial center, which opened in 2002 as a museum that tells the facts about and lessons learned from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake of 1995, and how people rebuilt their lives after the devastating experience.

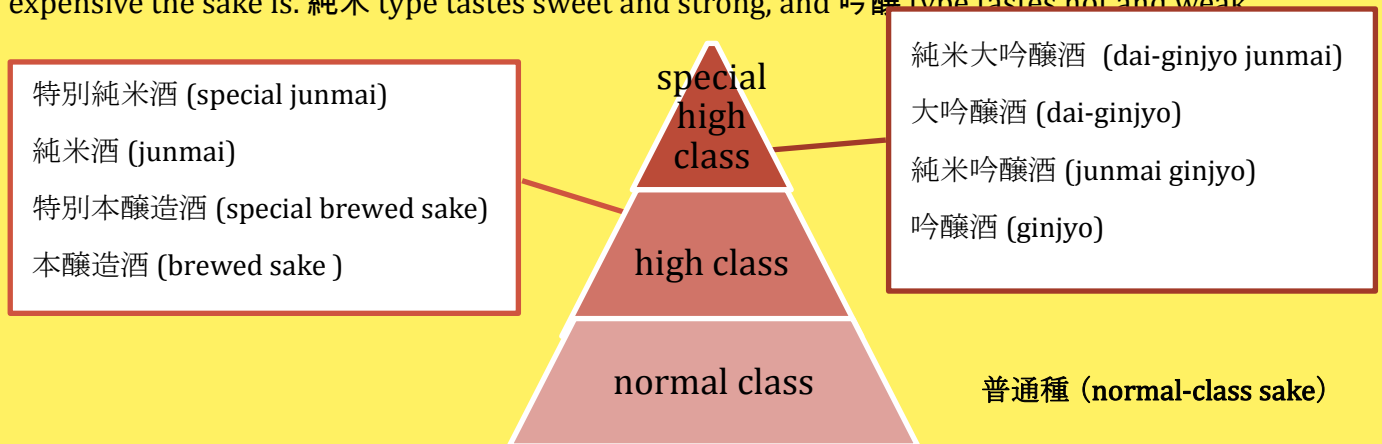


For example, there are many exhibits such as photos, a clock stopped at 5:46 am on January 17, 1995, and diaries that testify to the loss and damage caused by the disaster. The museum also shows a 7-minute film with impressive images and sounds through which visitors can virtually experience the magnitude of the earthquake that killed 6,434 people. There is also a diorama that recreated the circumstances just after the earthquake.

Then, they were divided into two groups and went to sake breweries. One group went to Hama-Fuku-Tsuru Ginjo Studio, and the other went to Kiku-Masamune Sake Brewery Museum—both in the city’s Nada area, which is the most famous district of the brewing industry in Japan. The area still accounts for 30 percent of sake production in Japan. Hama-Fuku-Tsuru Ginjo Studio was opened in 2006 in order to spread knowledge about how to produce sake (rice wine), one of the traditional Japanese cultures. Kiku-Masamune Sake Brewery Museum was originally opened in 1960 and reopened in 1999 after suffering damage by the 1995 earthquake. The memorial hall exhibits inherited knowledge and equipment to make sake.

~Did You Know~

Sake is divided into nine categories according to the ingredients used and the brewing process. Firstly, if the name of a sake contains “純米” (*junmai*, pure rice), the sake is made of only rice and rice *koji* (a kind of rice which has mold). If a sake doesn’t have 純米, the sake also uses strong *shochu* (spirits distilled from such materials as rice or sweet potatoes). Secondly, when a name contains “吟醸” (*ginjo*), it uses polished rice, less than 60% in size after milling, and it is made under a low temperature for a long time. The larger the part of rice that is milled, the more expensive the sake is. 純米 type tastes sweet and strong, and 吟醸 type tastes hot and weak



Then the delegates moved to Kobe Municipal Foreign Cemetery, which is located on a mountain, about 30 minutes drive northward from Nada. The cemetery accommodates some 2700 graves under which lay some 2800 people from 61 countries from the late 19th century when the Port of Kobe was opened. Many of these people from overseas contributed to the modernization of Kobe industry and devoted their energy to the improvement of culture and education in Kobe from the last days of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the Meiji era.

The visitors then went on to Venus Bridge, a 90-meter pedestrian bridge that connects two observatories in the mountainous Suwayama Park. Dubbed as “Kobe’s Jewelry Box,” the figure eight-shaped bridge is popular for allowing a night view of the city, which is one of the most famous views in Japan.

There were also two short tours for a small group of participants who arrived in the afternoon on Sunday. After visiting DRI, they went to Harbor Land, one of the most popular districts in Kobe with a shopping mall built on the site of historical harbor. In the past, Japanese people waited for ships from other countries at the harbor, and these days visitors can now enjoy the special seasonal illumination of the landmarks in the area.

All of spots they visited have historical meanings and are loved by Kobe citizens, who are proud of their city, which was designated as one of UNESCO’s Creative Cities of Design in 2008.



The delegates from China at the Harbor Land. From left, Tiana, Livia and Xin.

Patricia Allhen Marie Catu, a delegate from De La Salle-College in Saint Benilde, the Philippines, said she was impressed by exhibits at DRI because they were highly relevant to the conference, especially to agenda 2 of ECOSOC of which she is in charge, which focuses on disaster risk destruction (DRR). She said, “It was really important for me. As a Filipina, it was good to see the museum because there have been a lot of disasters in my country too. It gives me an idea that other countries also should try to be prepared for disasters like Japan.”

The participants in the tours returned to Port Island to have themselves registered for the conference in the lobby of the Kobe Portopia Hotel by the staff of the National Collegiate Conference Association (NCCA), a Minneapolis-based non-profit organization that organizes the conference, before going to their hotel rooms.

Next to the NCCA registration desk was the Information Service desk operated by KCUFS students, which assisted delegates from overseas all day long. Student committee members handed out a packet of information brochures and other materials that would be helpful for their stay in Kobe.

Together with some 50 faculty members from the participating universities, a total of about 380 will be registered for the conference by Wednesday. Some 280 of them will be traveling to Hiroshima and Kyoto on Monday and Tuesday.



Interviews

Non-Local Affirms Her Love of Kobe

Shiori Kamihira, junior at KCUFS's International Relations Department, wanted to guide visitors around Kobe, a city she missed so much during a year-long study abroad in the U.S and Singapore, until she returned this autumn. Originally from Tottori, a prefecture facing the Japan Sea, located north of Hiroshima, Kamihira says she can enumerate the beauties of the city forever, and has a beef about Kobe being behind Osaka in name recognition. She could not talk to the visitors very much because she was so busy just moving with the group from one place to the next and checking out that nobody was missing. However, it was good that she got to know them. It was a short trip and she did not have enough time to explain things, but she is happy that the delegates seem to have been impressed by the night view of the city from Harbor Land. The delegates came to Kobe to participate in NMUN, and Kamihira now hopes they will come back just to visit the city.



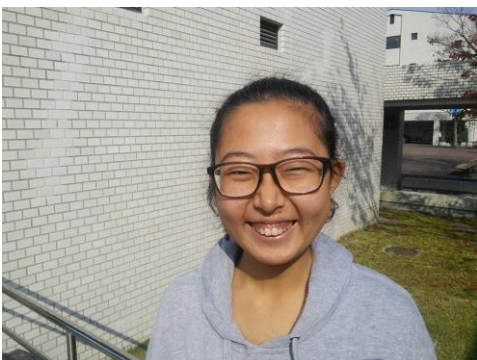
Full of Passion to Tell about Hiroshima

Maya Takamoto has a special interest in Hiroshima as a city, which was atom-bombed, because her grandparents were a-bomb survivors. A senior in KCUFS' International Relations Department and the leader of the Hiroshima Visit has heard from them directly about their experiences and feels a strong responsibility to tell others about the horrible effects of the atomic bomb. "It is a great opportunity to tell people around the world what happened in Hiroshima," she said. She would like delegates to see and listen to the story of Hiroshima with their own eyes and ears, and think about it and what is not in textbooks. It is important to think in depth and have your own idea, she believes. She hopes that the opportunity in Hiroshima to listen to the story of a *hibakusha* will help delegates to consider the issues of nuclear weapons. "Of course I do not intend to force my idea on others, and I know there are politically complicated relations in the world," she says. "But there is no reason to support using the atomic bomb."



A Kyoto Local Speaks about Ancient Religion and History

Shoka Fukui, senior at KCUFS' Spanish Studies Department who is the leader of the Kyoto visits, is from Kyoto and would like to tell what is fascinating about Kyoto. She wanted to be involved in the NMUN Japan in some way. It has been hard to organize the team because there was no preceding model for guiding as many as 270 people, so they had to build the team from a scratch. Five assistant leaders made an extraordinary effort, and it could not have been possible without them, she said. She would like delegates to know more about religions in Kyoto. There are people living with a lot of religious customs and values. By knowing them, they should be able to feel the atmosphere of traditional Japan and to learn about its culture. Also, she would like them to get to know the historical background in Kyoto. The student volunteer guides in the cultural visit program are not professional guides. She hopes overseas delegates will enjoy the Kyoto visit, which is guided by students who are just like them. "Please do not hesitate to ask us anything you do not understand."





History of Shrine



By Sae Oishi

Jinja (神社), or Japanese shrines, allow you to feel a spiritual and mysterious atmosphere as if being in a different time away from the contemporary world. Shrines were built to respect many kinds of objects based on Shinto (神道), a Japanese indigenous religion that does not have a single god: instead, Shinto recognizes spirits of the ancestors of royals from the Imperial House or great historical or fabled/legendary figures, animals, nature, etc. There are more than a hundred thousand shrines all over Japan.

The oldest ones were founded in prehistoric times. There is the notion of "Yaoyorozu no kami," (八百万の神) which in Japanese means literally "eight hundred," therefore a great number of kami (gods) and that's why there are many kinds of objects enshrined in Japanese shrines, whether human or nature, real or imaginary.

In ancient times people believed indigenous religions (polytheism) in every local village. In 6th century Buddhism was officially introduced in Japan through India, China and the Korean Peninsula, and people were broad-minded and flexible enough to welcome the new God (Buddha) among other different gods.

As time passed, Buddhism was gradually integrated with traditional Shinto until the Edo period (19th century). Inside the shrine's precinct, temples were constructed, which are called Jingu-ji (神宮寺). In the Meiji era, 1868, the government passed the law that clearly separated God and Buddha in order to be a nation led by Shinto.



Difference from temples (Tera: 寺) 卍

Temples are related to Buddhism, a religion that originated in India and China. Inside the structure you can see images of Buddha and worship with Buddhist monks. On the contrary, shrines are only seen in Japan and there are no specific images there.

Before the shrine structure you will go through the gateway called "Torii" (鳥居) at the entrance. Torii is thought to be the border of two worlds, this human world and another world where gods live. They have lived in harmony in different places.

People visit shrines for various reasons. In the winter season students and their families come to pray for success in entrance examinations; expectant mothers pray for easy childbirth; other people pray for good health, long life, good human relationships; pretty much anything is acceptable. Most people visit on New Year's days to help guarantee a wonderful fortune all year long.



Don't forget to get a talisman (Omamori) and draw a fortune slip (Omikuji)!

Kobe has some shrines, like all Japanese cities. **Minatogawa Shrine** (湊川神社)

Kusunoki Masashige (楠木正成), a samurai during 13~14th centuries, is enshrined here.

Location: near Kosoku Kobe (高速神戸) station in Hankyu, Hanshin or Sanyo Line; five minutes from Okurayama (大倉山) subway station.



Photo courtesy of the Minatogawa Shrine

Ikuta Shrine (生田神社)

Famous for the Japanese celebrity couple having a wedding ceremony.

Location: ten-minute walk from 'Sannomiya' (三宮) station

KOBE BEEF

By Shione Shiraishi

Kobe Beef is expensive and the most famous product of Tajima cow. Tajima cow is raised in Hyogo prefecture. The meat is very tender and smooth because it comes from good stock and its muscular tissue is small. It is raised in very strict breeding environment. The cow that passed the stringent inspection can be called "Kobe Beef."

Originally, a British man found the value of Kobe Beef. 150 years ago, Japanese people didn't have the custom to eat beef. Around that time, Kobe Port was opened and many people came from abroad. European people in the foreign settlement ate beef naturally, and they helped to establish the value of beef. After that, Japanese people began to eat beef improved by advances made by Japanese society since the Meiji era.

Sources:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/11/travel/budget-travel-kobe-japan.html>

<http://www.koubegyuu.com/en/kisshokichi/kobebeef.php>

<http://kobebeef-kanko.com/history/>



photo by courtesy of Kisshokichi
<http://www.koubegyuu.com/shop/kisshokichi-honten/>

In some countries, some people automatically think that "Kobe beef" means any kind of delicious beef, which occasionally results in false claims of normal beef being called "Kobe beef." Some people even mistake "Kobe" as a species of cow, instead of a place name!

Recommended Restaurants



広重(Hiroshige)

This restaurant provides Kobe Beef bowl at 1200 yen. In general, Kobe Beef costs about 3000 yen. So you can enjoy eating Kobe Beef. The restaurant closes as the day's stock runs out.

Address: 1-22-21 Nakayamatedori, Chuo-ku, Kobe
Eight minutes walk to north IR Sannomiva Station.

吉祥吉 (Kisshokichi)

This restaurant serves beef steak and other cuisines using Kobe beef. Its Motomachi branch provides Kobe Beef steak hamburger at 1000 yen.

Photo by courtesy of Kisshokichi

http://www.koubegyuu.com/shop/kisshokichi-nankinmachi/image/lunch/steak_burger/01.jpg



Red Rock

This place doesn't provide Kobe Beef, but you can enjoy eating roast beef bowl at 850 yen. If you don't want to spend much money, you can go to this store. This shop is the latest trend in Japan. There are three restaurants in Kobe area.