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Japan's longest toll-free bridge is the Irapu-Ohashi Bridge, connecting Miyakojima Island and Irapujima Island with a length of some 3,540 meters. We asked the people of Miyako Islands about the bridges and the background to the structures, as well as their impact on people, their lives, and the flow of commodities.

Life on Miyakojima Island — Islands of Okinawa connected by bridge —

It all began with requests from the village

Miyakojima City, Okinawa Prefecture is about three hours from Tokyo by direct flight, at a distance of some 2,000 kilometers. It consists of six large and small islands with a population of about 55,000 people, sitting approximately 300 kilometers from Naha City. Looking at a map, one gets a sense of how close it is to Taiwan (some 380 kilometers to Taipei). Miyakojima City is home to Japan's longest toll-free bridge—the Irapu-Ohashi Bridge. Stretching 3,540 meters, it links Miyakojima Island, which is the center of Miyakojima City, with Irapu Island—an area known for its skipjack tuna.

Construction of the bridge began in 2006, and the bridge was

completed in January 2015 at a price tag of approximately ¥40 billion.

Requests for a bridge started in 1974, when Irapu was still a village. Though there was regular ship service—including cargo shipment—between Irapujima and Miyakojima, such as a ferry that took approximately 30 minutes and a high-speed boat that took about 15 minutes, the service was sometimes suspended for days due to bad weather including typhoons.

Even in good weather, the villagers were forced to rely on charter boat services. Going back in history to the year 1940, there was a tragic marine incident where a boat owned by the village sunk due to strong winds, killing 72 people just off the coast of the island. The people then began to ask for a bridge.

The reason for the bridge's beautiful curves

Irapu-Ohashi Bridge finally opened some 40 years after the islanders first began to ask for it. The bridge, which spans the cobalt-blue (also known as “Miyako blue”) sea, is now a sightseeing spot in itself. It is often used in TV commercials, TV programs, and more. Instead of a straight-line structure, the bridge has three small “mountains” where there are differences in height, such that from the air it looks like a gentle curve. These three spots are built higher to allow for boat traffic in the canals below, including fishing and commodity boats as well as

large vessels.

The tallest part of the bridge stands 27 meters above sea level. The curved parts of the bridge are also designed to avoid algae-growth areas identified with prior environmental research. Mr. Okinaga of the Road Construction Department, Miyakojima Civil Engineering Office, Okinawa Prefecture, which manages the bridge, also cites other attributes of the bridge, including durability and its role as a lifeline.

“The Irapu-Ohashi Bridge is more than a road to the islanders. It is crucial to their lives. In addition to its role in the flow of vehicles and people, it also connects water pipes through the Miyakojima underground dam as well as agricultural pipes. Electric and communication lines such as optical fiber cables also go through the

The color of the ocean on the commute over the bridge is striking every season of the year



bridge. For these reasons the bridge is designed to last 100 years, featuring salt-resistant materials and special paints.

In addition, we work to reduce lighting fixtures as far as possible, as part of strategies to counteract damage that might occur if these fixtures fell during a typhoon. The curve of the bridge and the simplicity of the design were crafted to conform to the local lifestyle and the natural environment of the area.

Memories of commuting to high school by boat

We asked Irabujima Island residents how life has changed at the ten-year mark since the bridge was opened. Ms. Matsuura Ikue, who works for the Miyakojima Tourist Association, was born on Irabujima Island, left the island for a period of time, but returned home. “It’s definitely become more convenient, including factors such as the flow of commodities.”

“I was born and raised in a fishing port town called Sarahama, but today you can buy fish more easily living in Miyakojima. We used to worry about the water supply failing, but we no longer have that worry. And when I was a high school student, I used to commute by boat to Miyakojima. The last boat left at about 6:30 or 7:00 in the evening. It was hard on me that I couldn’t spend time with my friends after class.”

Ms. Middleton Yukiko, also an employee of the Miyakojima Tourist Association, moved to the United States, but later returned to live on

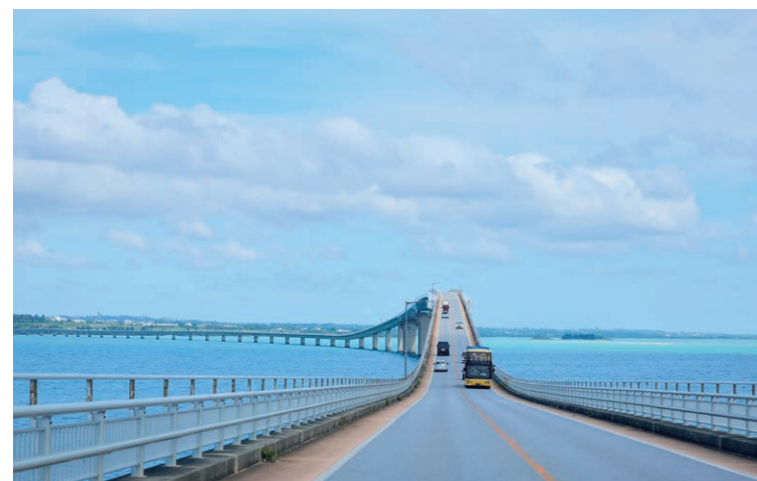


Matsuura Ikue (left) and Middleton Yukiko (right). Both are from Irabujima Island, left the island after graduation, came back to it, and currently reside there. They both commute every day on the bridge.

Miyakojima Island. Looking back, she says, “I was raised on Irabujima until high school. When there was still no bridge, the mother of a friend of ours went into labor on the boat, delivered by the captain. This kind of thing wasn’t unusual.”

“Today I cross the bridge by car in the morning and evening to commute, and I really enjoy the scenery as it changes with the seasons. The moment the sun sets, you can witness the “green flash” of the ocean. But when we used to take the boat, we would have some conversations with our relatives, local elderly women, and other people, and that was really nice to have that kind of communication. It’s sad that we don’t have that anymore.”

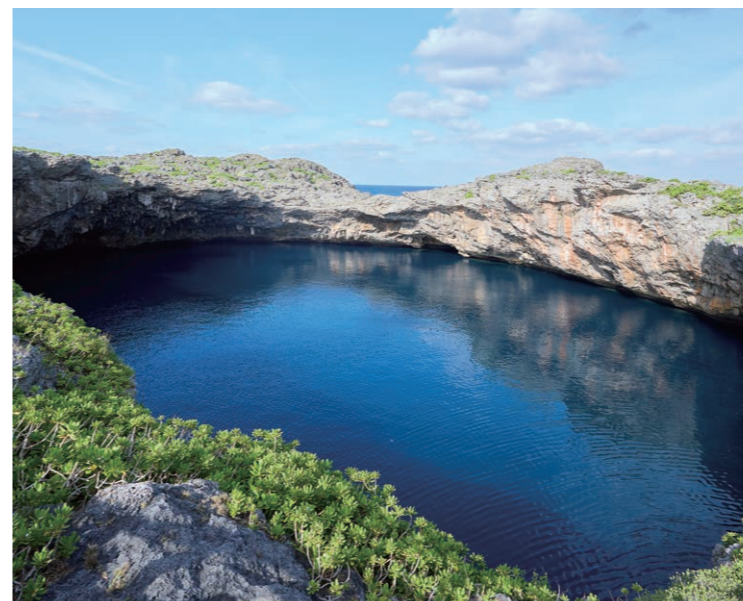
Bridges have been built since ancient times as a means for humans to move and also for transport of materials. The concept began with rocks lined up in a river, logs chopped down to create log bridges, followed by the development of other types of bridges, such as suspension bridges, arch bridges, and more. On archipelagos Okinawa Prefecture, factors such as containership transport and the “last mile transport” after arriving at the port impact the quality of life of the residents. In addition to the convenience of the bridge, it should also pique interest in travel in Okinawa.



Top left: Irabu-Ohashi Bridge. Parking is prohibited on the bridge. The pedestrian pathway on both sides of the road allow for both pedestrian and bicycle traffic.
Top right: Shisa guardian lions placed in front of building roofs and home entranceways.
Bottom left: Gorgeous hibiscus flowers bloom year-round.
Bottom right: The screw pine fruit gives the area a tropical atmosphere

The mangrove district of Shimajiri

These are the largest mangroves of Miyakojima Island. Five species of three families of mangrove grow here in coves one-kilometer in depth. The habitat of these evergreens is the muddy soil of subtropical coasts and estuaries. The mangrove forests of Shimajiri have been designated a natural monument. Because there is a pedestrian walkway, visitors can view the animals and plants including the mangrove trees, crabs that live in this area, and more.

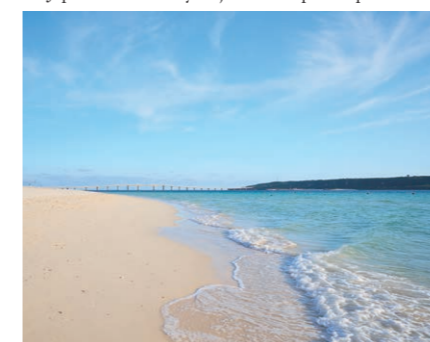


Tori-Ike Pond

Tori-Ike Pond is actually two large ponds, each measuring more than 50 meters in width. It is located in Shimojishima Island, which sits just west of Irabujima Island. The two ponds are connected underground, and they also lead out into the ocean, making this an ideal diving spot.

Yonahamaehama Beach

The Yonahamaehama Beach, known as Okinawa’s most beautiful beach, is located in the south area of Miyakojima Island. Stretching roughly seven kilometers in length, it is blessed with fine white sand and the cobalt-blue ocean. The contrast is breathtaking. Kurimajima Island is just opposite. This area is an ideal spot to enjoy various marine sports, and is also the starting point of the All-Japan Triathlon Miyakojima Championships.

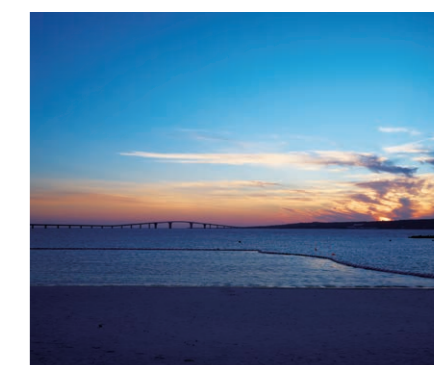


Toguchi-no-Hama Beach

Toguchi-no-Hama Beach, shaped like a curved bow, stretches 800 meters of the southeastern area of Irabujima Island. This popular beach is full of fine white sand. The location also offers showers and toilet facilities, so visitors can comfortably swim in the ocean—and clean up afterward. Miyakojima Island and Kurimahima Island sit in just in front.

Miyako Sunset Beach

The Miyako Sunset Beach is located inside the Turiba Seaside Park, which is near the Miyakojima side of the Irabu-Ohashi Bridge. This spot is well-known as a wonderful place to view the setting sun along with the silhouette of the Irabu-Ohashi Bridge. This place is also a local favorite, and many people bring their dogs to take a leisurely walk at sunset.



Driving across three large bridges, with the beauty of Miyakojima Island



In addition to Irabu-Hashi Bridge, Miyakojima City is home to two other bridges over 1,000 meters. One is the Ikema-Hashi Bridge, connecting Miyakojima Island and Ikemajima Island (1,425 meters), and the other is the Kurima-Hashi Bridge connecting Miyakojima Island and Kurimajima Island (1,690 meters). Both bridges were built in 1990. Visitors can drive all three bridges and see five islands in just half a day. The following is a simple overview.

Japan's largest farm bridge

First, drive from Miyakojima Island to Irabu Island on the Irabu-Hashi Bridge. There is a parking lot just before the bridge, which is the first spot to view the bridge. And once you drive across the bridge, there are two more spots offering fantastic views of the bridge: Irabu-Hashi Seaside Station and the Makiyama Observation Deck.

The Makiyama Observation Deck is the highest point in Irabujima Island, as such offering a perfect spot to view the flora and fauna of the area's subtropical forest. On Irabujima Island, and on Shimojishima Island—which is just to the west of Irabujima—there are numerous famous spots including Tori-Ike pond and Toguchinohama Beach.

A great place to eat on Irabujima Island's Sarahama Beach is Obanmai Shokudo Cafeteria, located in Sarahama fishing port. Try the Miyako noodles fresh seafood on rice, and more. Next, drive over the Ikema-Hashi Bridge, and proceed to Ikemajima Island.

Then go back to Miyakojima Island, and head north to Ikemajima Island. Ikemajima is home to the Ikema Wetlands—some of the most expansive wetlands of Okinawa Prefecture—an ideal place to observe wild birds. Another popular spot is the "heart of happiness rock" that



Ikema-Hashi Bridge

Ikema-Hashi Bridge, stretching 1,425 meters, was completed in 1992. The photo was taken from the observation deck on the Ikemajima Island side of the Ikema-Hashi Bridge, where there is a souvenir shop and restaurant (Kaimuru). The Ikema-Hashi Bridge and Ikemajima Island are part of the All-Japan Triathlon Miyakojima Championships course—held annually in April—in which top athletes from Japan and other countries compete.

appears only after low tide.

A part of the coral reefs protruding along the coast have now eroded into a heart shape. Then return to Miyakojima Island and head southwest to Kurimajima Island. This island is known for agriculture including sugarcane cultivation; in fact, Kurimajima-Hashi Bridge was built as a farm road. This is one of the nation's longest farm roads,

ensuring a stable supply of inbound and outbound cargo. The view of the ocean from the bridge is a gorgeous one, changing with the angle of the light hitting the water.

It's a little bit of a walk, but we recommend crossing the bridge on foot. Kurimajima Island is great for shopping and taking a little break, offering shops selling miscellaneous goods including handmade accessories, Ryukyu glass, and more, as well as cafes. Then go back to Miyakojima Island and make your way to the Miyako Sunset Beach, a wonderful spot for viewing both the Irabu-Hashi Bridge and the sunset.



There's lots of good food on Miyakojima, including seafood rice bowls and Miyako soba noodles. The hamburger is from A&W, a local hamburger chain on the island. There are two A&W branches on the island: Miyako Shimosato Street and Miyako Airport.

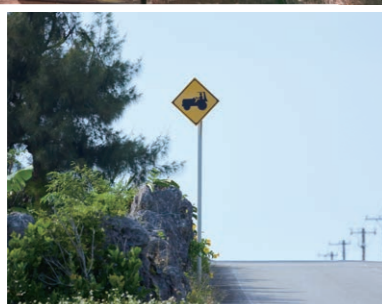


Kurima-Hashi Bridge

Top: The Kurima-Hashi Bridge, completed in 1995, measures 1,690 meters in length. Left: A monument built to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the opening of the Ikema-Hashi Bridge. It is engraved with the words, "The bridge brings prosperity to the island."



Top: Enjoy juice and gelato featuring local fruits such as mango at the cafes on Ikemajima Island. The city's numerous cafes and sweets shops offer menu items using these regional fruits. Right: A road sign says "Watch out for agricultural tractors."



Top left: Sugarcane fields across the ocean. This is a view that's impossible to miss driving through Miyakojima Island.



Top right: A view of the sparkling ocean.



Right: Miyakojima "Mamoru Kun" (safety police officer figure doll)

To ensure traffic safety, there are a total of 22 police officer figure dolls made by police stations and Traffic Safety Association branches. Police officer figure dolls stationed around the island in order to raise awareness on traffic safety. These figure dolls are each assigned different boys' names.

LOGISTEED Kyushu, Ltd. Fukuoka Operations Headquarters, Fukuoka Operations Office II, Okinawa Branch Office, strives to expand on business amidst Okinawa's unique culture and business practices

The Okinawa Branch Office of LOGISTEED Kyushu, Ltd. was established in 2021. Komatsu Takayuki, Director, remarks: "I'm the director of our southernmost office of the LOGISTEED Group in Japan. Right now there are just two of us, but we're working to expand, and our goal is to take the next step from branch to service office."

Our main job right now is overseeing regular deliveries to café chains and supermarkets, as well as home electronics. Deliveries are mostly on the main island of Okinawa, but we also operate ship and air transport to Ishigaki Island and Miyakojima Island.

"I just took on this job in April 2024, but I've heard that it's an Okinawan tradition to pause most business when public transportation stops due to typhoons."

Nagahama Taiki participated in the 50th Naha Hari, established in May 2024. The Hari is a traditional event in Okinawa, where everyone wishes for the safety of navigation and for an abundant fish catch. The participants compete in rowboats called "Dragon Boats."

"We work with the HITACHI Team on a regular basis, and they invited us to participate in this race. We did well, and I plan to do it again next

year—this time we'll be in it to win! We at the Okinawa Branch Office working to gradually solidify our position here."



Dragon Boat driven by Mr. Nagahama, oarsman, in the 50th Naha Hari



DATA	
Address:	Yone 50-71, Tomigusuku City, Okinawa Prefecture
No. of employees:	2
No. of inbound/outbound vehicles:	Approximately 20/day

Komatsu Takayuki (right) and Nagahama Taiki

The beginnings—and the future— of expressways —Major arteries supporting our day-to-day life and our economy—

Japan's expressways criss-crossing the nation total 9,300 kilometers, yet the history of these roads is surprisingly short. The first one opened in 1963, stretching between the Ritto IC and the Amagasaki IC on the Meishin Expressway. We visited the Kansai expressways, including this segment.



Some people came in their own vehicles from as far as Hokkaido and Kyushu to drive on the new Meishin Expressway, from the Kyoto South IC to the Kyoto West IC (Yamashina area).

The photo reveals everyone's delight at the opening ceremonies celebrating the completion of the Meishin Expressway, July 1963 (near Kyoto-Minami IC)



The view from the sky of the Meishin Expressway Otsu SA area when the road opened. A network of expressways would subsequently be built around the nation, serving to directly boost the development of the Japanese economy.

Japan gets a system of highly-developed roads

Japan's first expressway, the Meishin, was opened in July 1963, stretching 71.1 kilometers between the Ritto IC (Shiga Prefecture) and the Amagasaki IC (Hyogo Prefecture). Sixty-one years later, the nation's expressways total approximately 9300 kilometers in length (Annual Report of Road Statistics 2022), playing a key role in facilitating distribution around the nation. Until this time, however, many of Japan's roads remained unpaved, and road networks were considered poor compared to those of the U.S. and Europe.

In 1956, prior to construction of the Meishin Expressway, the government brought in the Watkins Survey Group of the World Bank.



The survey noted: "Japan's roads are unbelievably bad. There is no other industrial nation that has ignored road networks to this extent."

Japan's roads were underdeveloped due to the fact that subsequent to the Meiji Period (1868-1912), the government prioritized railway construction, putting roads on the back burner due to financial and other concerns. In addition, during the Edo Period (1603-1868), there were roads connecting Edo and the various regions, and many people travelled these roads. But unlike Europe, where horse-drawn carriages were common, the people walked on these roads, which meant they were not paved until later. The change came following the Watkins Survey Group survey, when the National Highway Act was enacted—eventually leading to the opening of the Meishin Expressway.

The Meishin Expressway was fully opened in 1965, followed by the

Tomei Expressway in 1969, the Chuo Expressway in 1982, and the Chugoku Expressway in 1983, completing the nation's network of longitudinal expressways. Japan's economy grew as if in tandem with the completion of this roadway network. People began to enjoy more affluence. Commodities essential to economic development were transported without issue, and the expressways became a key component of social infrastructure as facilitators of transport.

Keeping up with the era of digitalization

Expressways are now taking on broader and broader roles. They are used to transport agricultural and marine products from production locations and deliver them around the nation, boosting regional



The Otsu service area at the time the Meishin Expressway (Shiga Prefecture), Japan's first service area, opened in July 1963



Energy-saving and automatic driving: accommodating future needs

dynamism, and bringing in business to industrial parks to boost employment—in addition to their role as main arteries for travelers and people returning to their family homes in the countryside. These roads now also serve as a lifeline for delivery of supplies—directly and via roundabout routes—from location to location in response to needs caused by climate change, earthquakes, and other intensifying natural disasters, and more.

In addition, the networks must respond to rapid progress in advanced digital technologies. The West Japan Expressway Company (NEXCO West Japan) plans to expand on its capabilities on the “CASE” criteria for self-driving, i.e. Connected, Autonomous, Shared & Service, and Electric.

One example would be the driverless car-following system, with which only the lead truck driver is required, and the other vehicles will follow without a driver. At present, we are working on a line of six vehicles with a view to ensuring both safety and smooth operations on the Shin-Meishin Expressway. Projections indicate that this type of driving system will be achieved in the future.

Various initiatives are in the works with a view to commercializing self-driving cars, including offering more detailed information on traffic conditions. In addition, with a view to greater popularization of electric cars in the future, initiatives to provide battery-charging equipment to expressway service areas and parking areas are also underway.

The sum total of everyone's efforts

Ms. Togashi of NEXCO West Japan explains about passing the baton to upcoming generations, and moving forward into the future: “Meeting the needs of the times means that we are taking certain steps toward decarbonization, such as setting up solar panels on soundproof walls as

well as switching to LED lighting at tollgates, service areas, and parking areas.”

At the same time, we are moving forward with strategies to address aging facilities at this point in time, 61 years from opening. “We need to make sure the lane lines remain visible, so this kind of maintenance is required as well. If self-driving continues, then clear lines will be more important than ever.”

Additionally, service areas and parking areas are holding special events in collaboration with localities, boosting restroom facilities to make them more comfortable, and setting up shower stations to help drivers recover from a hard day's work. Ms. Kokita, who joined NEXCO West Japan a year ago, says: “My family home is in Osaka, and when I was a student, I remember being pleasantly surprised and impressed when I went with my family to the Takarazuka South service area.

I recall that the décor was definitely Takarazuka modern, and it wasn't like any service area I'd ever seen.” He also notes that he joined NEXCO West Japan with the idea of working on service areas and parking areas as a special guest—rather than a regular visitor!

However, upon joining the company, he became involved in strategies to counter instances of blocked parts of the road caused by natural disasters or accidents. To maintain the expressways and keep them open 365 days a year, 24 hours a day—as they should be—he learned that many people were involved in making this happen—and he changed his outlook.

Continues Ms. Kokita, “My hope is now to be involved in securing the safety and reliability of the expressways.” And Ms. Togashi adds: “Many of us feel we are on a mission. Many, many people are involved in everything to do with the expressways, from construction to launch to maintenance—and it's a crystallization of all the combined efforts of these people. We'll also be ready to pass on the baton when it's time.”



NEXCO West Japan Branch
Kokita Yuki (left)
NEXCO West Japan Branch
Togashi Yurika (right)

LOGISTEED Chemical, Ltd. No. 1 Headquarters West Japan Sales Department Kansai Distribution Center Handling dangerous items including chemicals A workplace with a good collaborative atmosphere, and many young people

The LOGISTEED Chemical, Ltd. Kansai Distribution Center, which handles mainly chemicals and hazardous materials, is a ten-minute walk or less from JR Amagasaki Station (Amagasaki City, Hyogo Prefecture), in an area of numerous industrial plants, commercial facilities, and residential areas. Center Director Sakai remarks, “Most of our employees commute by train, while some commute by car from nearby places. There aren't many distribution centers this close to the station.” Besides being close to the Meishin and

Amagasaki ICs, the center is also close to the Hanshin Expressway, which makes it highly convenient for customer access and deliveries.

Our major customer is a chemical manufacturer boasting the top share in organic pigments as well as print ink, and we are engaged in the storage and transport of these chemical raw materials and ink. We handle four different types of Class B hazardous materials, which means that our drivers making these deliveries must have the proper license to handle dangerous materials. One attribute of dangerous cargo handling under the Fire Services Act is that there are limits on the number of items that can be stored at once. We have lots of young people at our workplace—ten people in their

twenties and thirties—which in a way makes it more dynamic. Our older employees are mainly in their fifties, but nobody cares about age here, and we all go have a drink together.

There are many nice izakaya (traditional Japanese bars and eateries) nearby. Ms. Morita, who joined the company in 2020, says “When we go out for a drink, it's really fun because we can talk about absolutely everything.” The employees at Kansai Distribution Center, which relocated in light of safety strategies in the area, have a certain sense of working together. The center handling regular cargo is situated in Osaka City, while that handling hazardous cargo is in Kameoka City, Kyoto Prefecture. We're ready to make a new start!



Top: Tote Tank filled with ink, used for printing for delivery to newspaper companies. Tote tanks are also recycled, and used repeatedly.
Right: Transporting a drum can by forklift fitted with a drum clipper.



DATA
No. of employees: 40
Cargo volume: Approximately 80 trucks/day

From left: Mr. Sakai, Center Director, Mr. Yoshimoto, Mr. Maruyama, and Ms. Morita

Enjoy taking in the history of these roads while driving

Japan's first expressway was opened between the Ritto IC and Amagasaki IC. The drive from Shiga Prefecture to Hyogo Prefecture, which includes this segment, is dotted with historic spots. The primary must-see is the Otsu Service Area, Japan's first service area to open, in tandem with the launch of the expressway in July 1963.

At the time, there were also cafeterias, gas stations, and auto repair places at these areas. Some autos broke down during this period due to

problems such as overheating, an issue that was solved by these repair places at services areas. Cafeterias also offered menu items such as coffee, curry rice, beef stew, and more. At Saimyoji Temple, which is located just off of the Koto-Miyama Smart IC bound for Hikone from the Otsu Service area, the Meishin Expressway runs just below the temple approach.

Here we really get a sense of the approach to design at the time, which

Japan's First Service Area

Otsu SA

This is the view of Lake Biwa from the Otsu service area. From this point, which has undergone renovation numerous times since it first opened, visitors can get a panoramic view of Mt. Hiei and the town of Otsu. Known in the present day as a special place for lovers, the inbound line is decorated with a heart-shaped monument that says "You + I." The outbound line has a stone called "PAVARIE Lake Biwa Otsu," where visitors can purchase local specialties from around Western Japan.



This area is near the approach to Saimyo-ji Temple, which is one of the three temples located around Lake Biwa, at Shiga Prefecture. The Main Hall and the three-storied pagoda have been named national treasures. Note the Meishin Expressway (bottom left photo) under the temple approach (bottom right photo). The Japan Road Group (as it was known at the time) designed the road so as to maintain this view.



Top: Plate providing an overview of the Meishin Expressway groundbreaking site, Katsuragawa PA (inbound)
Left: Otsu Service Area (outbound)
There is a rest stop at PAVARIE Lake Biwa Otsu, which offers showers and other amenities.

strove to harmonize road construction with the surrounding environment. Since the road would have cut across the approach to Saimyoji, which houses national treasures such as the Main Hall and three-storied pagoda, the road was instead dug deeper down in order to preserve the temple approach and the view. Because part of the temple approach was raised, the stone walls supporting the approach were also left as they were.

There is a plate providing an overview of the site of the Meishin Expressway groundbreaking, Katsuragawa PA (inbound). The actual monument commemorating the groundbreaking is located at Kyoto Yamashina median island, some nine kilometers northeast of Katsuragawa PA.

Sightseeing Spot in Osaka

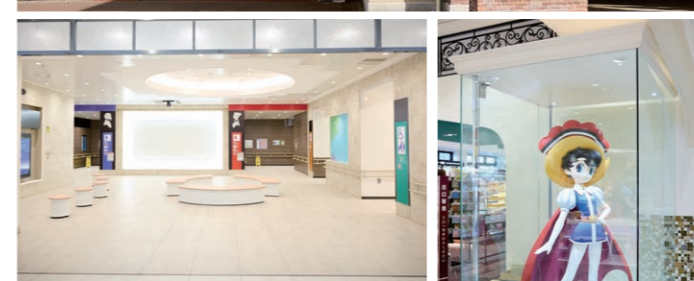


Expo '70 Commemorative Park

Address: Senribanoakuen, Suita, Osaka 565-0826
Hours: 9:30-17:00
Closed: Wednesdays

Takarazuka Modern
Takarazuka SA

The Shin-Meishin Expressway Takarazuka North Service Area, which was built based on the concept of Takarazuka Modern, which in turn is based on the Flower Trail—known for the Southern European look of the surrounding area—of the central districts of Takarazuka City. This place offers Takarazuka Revue and Tezuka Osamu goods for sale. But there's one more thing to see—and that's the toilets! The women's restrooms are decorated with a chandelier for an elegant atmosphere. There are also powder and changing rooms.



Top: Takarazuka modern building
Bottom left: Entrance to the fancy toilet
Bottom center: Tezuka Osamu, a premier figure in the world of manga, is from Takarazuka City. See a full-size model of his popular character "Princess Knight Sapphire."
Bottom right: Astro Boy—an exclusive to this spot!—and a topiary (right). And don't forget to try the famous Otakarabokkake beef-on-rice dish featuring Banshu beef (left).

Hosoya Shoma claimed the prize for a single segment of the Hakone Ekiden relay race for two consecutive years as a third and fourth year student at Teikyo University.

After graduating from university, he worked as a civil servant for the Tendo City Municipal Office while at the same time doing Track & Field. He resigned from his job in May 2023, at which time he joined the LOGISTEED Track & Field Club. We asked him about his thoughts on Track & Field.

What made you want to do Track & Field?

My father coached track & field, which I joined as a second year elementary school student. I guess you could say I first started with the idea that I thought of practicing sports simply as learning something new.

What made you want to join the LOGISTEED Track & Field Club, and what do you think of it?

I began to have greater ambitions, such as being able to compete in larger-scale events such as global races, and specifically at this time I wanted to be a part of a corporate team. I was introduced by an advisor to the Track & Field Club that I had known as a high school student, and when I expressed what I wanted to do, I was given the opportunity to join the LOGISTEED Track & Field Club. It's been really stimulating for me to be with high-level competitors. This is a truly wonderful environment with all the great support I get from people in the company. I greatly appreciate it.

“ I joined LOGISTEED because I wanted to work on the world stage. ”

What about office work?

I work two days a week at the LOGISTEED Auto Service Head Office.

What are your goals from this point onward?

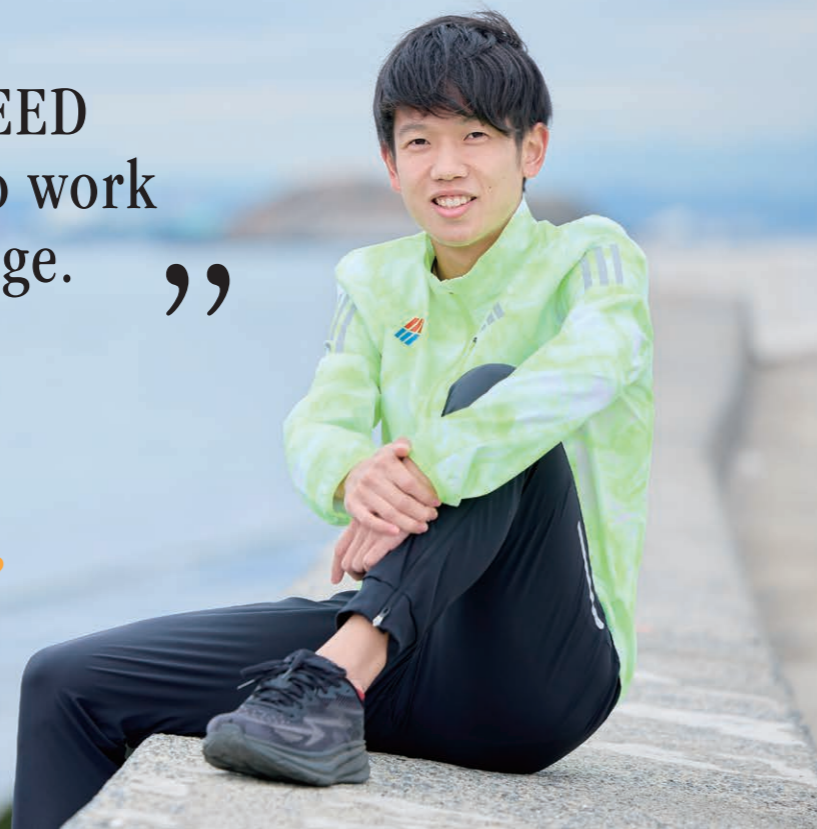
I want to compete on the world stage in the sport of marathon. I'm also working hard to do my part for the team in the ekiden relay race.

Claiming the prize for a single segment of the Hakone Ekiden relay race for two consecutive years

I was not a strong competitor compared to my fellow athletes when I first enrolled in university. However, during the latter half of my time at university I was able to produce some results, because I practiced consistently without injuring myself. I have my own philosophy about personal training as an individual, and I'm happy with myself that I've been able to go the distance.

After graduating from university you began working at the Tendo City Municipal Office. How did you continue with Track & Field during this time?

After finishing work at the Municipal Office at the regular time, I would practice on my own, but as people might think, it wasn't easy. Yet I found I was able to make progress when I had the opportunity to practice with athletes running in races against the municipal teams. This experience was also gratifying because it gave me a real sense of being part of the community.



When I was in university, I ran cross-country in the World Championships. I want a new challenge this year, seven years onward—and that's to run a marathon.

Representing Japan in cross-country as a third-year university student

I ran in the World Cross-Country Championships, Senior Men's 10-kilometer race, held in Uganda, East Africa, in March 2017. Cross-country races are not run on tracks or paved roads—instead they are run on grass, sand, and uneven ground. In most two-kilometer courses there are steep uphill and downhill portions and also more subtle ups-and-downs. The Championships course in Uganda were made by shovel cars digging holes and filled with water to waist level. The holes are big enough so that no one can jump across. Japanese cross-country courses are never this hard, so it was a great experience! Some local athletes can jump across, but most—including me—end up in holes, get wet, and continue running.

What made you join LOGISTEED Track & Field?

I joined Track & Field in April 2018. At the time, many members of the LOGISTEED Track & Field Club practiced on the track to improve their speed. This made me think that I could get a lot stronger too if I ran like they did. Mr. Muta's presence as captain was also highly significant. I happened to watch Mr. Muta run the 5000-meter race for a different high school. He ran the last 400-meter lap in 54 or 55 seconds. There are hardly any non-full-time athletes that can get a time like that in the last lap. It made a huge impression on me! And from then on I was paying attention to Mr. Muta. He joined our own team, and I joined the club with the thought of eventually outdoing Mr. Muta.

“ I make that last push to the end when I hear the crowd cheering. ”

What about office work?

I have worked for LOGISTEED Express since April 2024, twice a week.

What's your goal for today?

I want to run as the company's representative in the New Year Ekiden Relay Race. And I also want to place in the top eight in the February 2025 marathon.

How do you spend your days off?

I take walks with my wife and go out to eat with my friends. I'm also studying to be a customs agent in the future.

What's your favorite quote?

“Where there's a will there's a way.”





Moving forward in the world of professional golf, remembering gratitude and concentration.

Professional Golfer
Yoshimoto Kokone

Ms. Yoshimoto passed the professional women's golf test in just one try after graduating from high school in Sapporo City, Hokkaido. She has been playing golf since she was in the third grade of elementary school. She practiced 360 days out of 365 days a year in junior high and high school, and is now regarded as a prominent young golfer. We asked about her strong passion for golf, which she says has never diminished, and her path since childhood.

"I wanted to be like the women professionals since I was in elementary school."

At present, there are many professional young women golfers. Yoshimoto Kokone is one of them. In the 9th round of the 2023 JLPGA Step Up Tour 2023 Route Inn Cup Ueda Maruko Grandvrio Ladies, she won out in a close playoff game—her first victory in June 2023.

Ms. Yoshimoto first encountered golf when she was in kindergarten. Her father also played golf as an amateur, and as a child she went with her family to see professional women's golf in her local part of Hokkaido. Looking back, she says "I thought the professional women looks so cool, and that I wanted to be like them." After that, she began taking weekly lessons at a local gym near her home.

"It was so much fun that I told my parents I wanted to practice more, and as of fourth grade onward they sent me to take lessons at a golf course to prepare for junior competitions. It was about ten minutes away by car, and my parents picked me up and dropped me off every single day. At first it was really fun for me just to be able to hit the ball with the club. Then I started playing short courses, and it made me really happy that my scores improved day by day, and so I became more and more engaged in the sport." She began playing golf tournaments in the higher grades of elementary school, winning the Hokkaido Junior Golf Championships, placing eight in the Japan Elementary School Student Golf Tournament, and more.

Going to one of the only two high schools in Hokkaido to offer golf

Still practicing 360 out of 365 days a year as a junior high school student, Ms. Yoshimoto went on to attend Sapporo Kosei High School, which was one of only two high schools in Hokkaido to offer golf. One of the requirements for candidates-by-recommendation was to earn at least a Level 3 on the English Proficiency Exam. Because Sapporo Kosei High School is for college-bound students, she began studying as of junior high with a view to enrolling in Sapporo Kosei.

Ms. Yoshimoto says, "I never lost my passion for golf, and I wanted to be a professional, but I also was getting a sense of the difficulty of being a professional, and so I decided I'd make sure I studied hard—as having a good academic background would come in handy if my golf career didn't go well. I passed Level Pre-2 of the English Proficiency Exam in high school." Of course she played golf in high school.

"When I was part of the golf club, we took a bus—we called it the sports club bus—to get to the golf practice area or the golf course, and then we did our rounds. It was driven by one of our advisors." Ms. Yoshimoto went on to place in various tournaments around Hokkaido and around the nation, joining the Japan Golf Association (JGA) national team during her third year of high school. Here favorite memory of high school is a

school trip.

"We travelled around Kyushu, to places like Nagasaki and Fukuoka. I actually brought a small golf club with me, and over the five days of the trip I would secretly practice golf at night, taking practice swings when no one else could see," she laughs.

The challenges of being a professional

After graduating from high school in 2018, she past the final professional test of the Japan Ladies Professional Golf Association (JLPGA) on the first try. Her childhood dream of becoming a professional had come true. We asked her the difference between being an amateur and being a pro: "As an amateur, you are free to play in local tournaments if you simply pay an entry fee.

But when you're a professional, you can't take it for granted that you'll be playing. There are tournaments that you must play first to be able to play in other tournaments, and you really have to be able to take opportunities for yourself," says Ms. Yoshimoto. The players also take care of all their own travel yourself during golf season. "There have been times when I couldn't go back to my own house for as long as four months. My mother helps with my travel, like driving a rental car for me from the nearest airport to the venue.

As I expected, this world was tough indeed. During competitions, I try to calm myself down and pull myself together. I try to figure out what my problem is, and work to fix it."

For Ms. Yoshimoto, the appeal of golf lies in the idea that the game happens naturally.

"One aspect of the sport of golf is that it is in a sense a battle with nature. It is influenced by the climate, and the conditions of the green change from day to day. So we have to decide on a strategy, and that's what's interesting about it," she says.

"Gratitude and concentration" stamped onto her golf balls

"My goal from this time onward was to win on regular tours, and later to be seeded on these tours. I'm not a distance golfer; instead my goal is to correctly perceive challenges and take the play without missing a chance. I have a high percentage on the fairway, and one of my strengths is that I have few bogeys. I believe the reason I am able to hit with flexibility has to do with repeated practice from the time I was little."

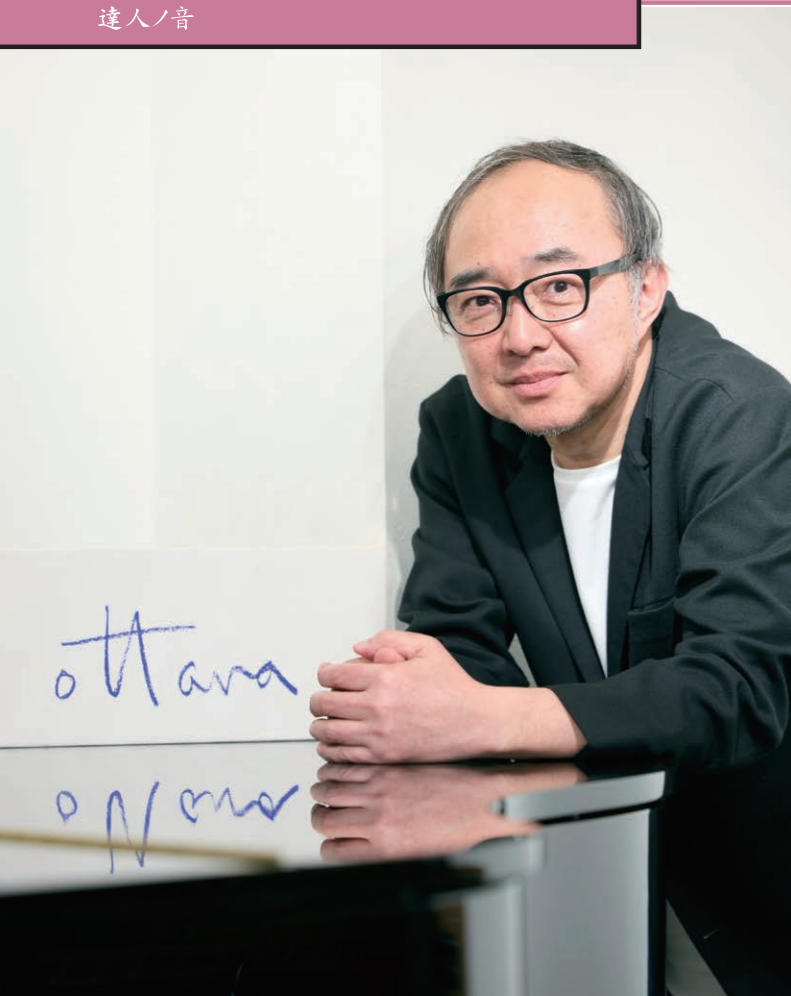
Ms. Yoshimoto never forgets to be grateful to everyone supporting her from day to day. That's why she has "Gratitude and Concentration" stamped onto her golf balls.

"Gratitude and Concentration" was the slogan of my high school golf club. I liked this slogan, and so I had it stamped on my gold balls so I wouldn't forget it. I'm energized by the people that cheer me on and support me, as well as my sponsors. This makes me feel I want to do my best. I can then focus on the ball with concentration," she says with conviction.



Top: Golf balls stamped with the words "Gratitude and Concentration." For Ms. Yoshimoto, this means she always remembers to be grateful to the people who support her and cheer her on.
Bottom: A hybrid No. 5 club that I use often.
This golf club is not built to yield distance, but it is highly accurate within 100 yards, so she uses it to go for the birdie.





A regular dedicated classical music station, a leader in Internet radio broadcasting

Representative Director & President/Presenter, OTTAVA
Saito Shigeru

OTTAVA, the first dedicated classical music Internet radio station, was established in 2007 to give listeners a chance to comfortably enjoy classical music in everyday life. At present, Saito Shigeru serves as Representative Director and President. Mr. Saito has forty years of history in making radio programs. We asked him what he likes about classical music and radio.

OTTAVA, launched in 2007, is Japan's only dedicated classical music Internet radio station. At present, people around the world—anyone with a PC or a Smart Phone—can listen to and enjoy classical music 24 hours a day with a paid subscription. The station has about a million listeners in some 50 countries around the world.

"I even received an e-mail from a university professor, who was part of the wintering party on Showa Station on Antarctica, during the time he was on the station," remarked President Saito, surprised that anyone in a place as remote as Antarctica

would be listening. Being a presenter means being a DJ for the program—meaning they not only speak but also conduct drawings, give performances, and operate equipment." OTTAVA employs eight regular presenters for live programming, including Mr. Saito.

I decided to take private lessons, drawn in by the sound of the clarinet.

Mr. Saito was born in Sapporo City. At the age of five, he began attending a local music school, learning first organ—followed by piano—at the age of 18. In addition, from the time he was in fourth grade of elementary school he started taking one-on-one lessons from a clarinet player in his local area. He was in the band in junior high school, later joining an amateur orchestra in high school.

"My parents made me attend the music school when I was five. But the private clarinet lessons were my idea, and I asked my parents if I could do it. I would be coming home from elementary school and I would hear some beautiful music coming from a certain house. I went by there on my way home, so I heard that music every day. I asked my parents about it, and they told me it was the clarinet. I liked that sound and I told my parents that I wanted to learn that instrument, and so they asked that person to teach me," says Mr. Saito, looking back at his childhood.

"I studied the clarinet until I graduated from high school, and my teacher suggested that I should try to be a musician, but I ended up going to a regular university in Tokyo instead. I attend Aoyama University at the time when the Southern All Stars had just made their debut. I played the saxophone with friends, and also played the keyboard in a band. But instead of playing an instrument, I gradually became interested in the music industry. I got a part-time job in my second year of university in production on an FM radio station. I continued with the production after graduating from university, where I was in charge of guest performances with musicians such as Yamashita Tatsuro, Matsutoya Yumi, and Sakamoto Ryuichi."

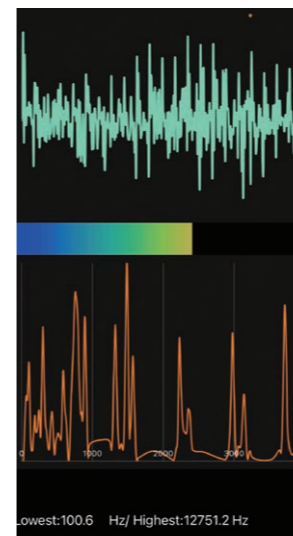
"Of course in the beginning I was an AD. I had a good affinity with Sakamoto Ryuichi during this period in my life, which led to me working for J-WAVE later. I've been freelance since 2006, since which time I've been helping out with Sakamoto Ryuichi's concerts. He's been a real supporter of OTTAVA since the station opened, and he even wrote out our sign for us himself."

Radio: Media shared with listeners

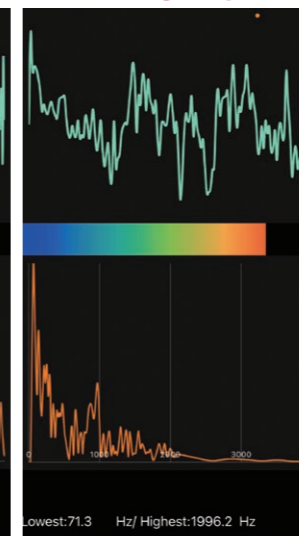
OTTAVA was originally opened as a broadcasting station by TBS Radio with a view to digitalizing radio broadcasting. Mr. Saito was asked to be a freelance music director, and so he became involved with the newly-opened broadcasting station. However, the station faced a crisis where it almost closed down when the plan for digitalization was terminated.

"In 2014, we announced that we would be stopping

Mozart songs



Elevated bridge on highway



The frequency of Mozart's compositions (left) and the frequency of an elevated bridge on a Tokyo Metropolitan highway (right). The frequency of Mozart's music surpasses 12,000 hertz, and overtone waveforms can be heard well. "Overtones" means the frequency of integer multiples as opposed to the basic tone we hear. Since the frequency of the sound of the elevated bridge falls below 2,000 hertz, the overtones are hardly heard. This discrepancy relates to the level of relaxation of the listener.

broadcasting services, but we received many messages for our listeners, asking us to continue—which lead us to make changes to our systems and keep going." Asked about the appeal of OTTAVA, Mr. Saito says, "Basically, songs should be five minutes or less. But with classical music one tune can last up to an hour, so we might take the best part of it, which could be the chorus. We also play Indonesian orchestra music, jazz, bossa nova, Celtic music, and more. We also play songs that the presenter thinks are good, though these tunes might not necessarily be famous. For instance, British composer Gerald Finzi is not well-known in Japan, but there was a time when we played his music every day on OTTAVA. Later, Finzi's music was played by Japanese orchestras." He notes that classical music has its own special appeal.

"Classical music has a lot of rich overtones, and much of it also has high frequencies. Sounds that make us feel relaxed, such as waves, rivers, leaves rubbing against each other, etc., also have high frequencies. These sounds are said to boost human immunity."

"High-frequency music is needed in order to help children develop their hearing."

In addition, since the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, OTTAVA has been engaged in supporting the Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra. Just fifteen days after the earthquake, we heard that the Sendai Philharmonic Orchestra was planning a concert to help with recovery in the affected area, and OTTAVA broadcasted that information. "The Orchestra members also listened



LOGISTEED presents OTTAVA Accademia

In order to help listeners experience music more deeply, top-level music world experts give lectures on live Webinars given four times a month. During these sessions they give simple hints on how to enjoy classical music.

Photo: Hirano Emiko, classical dance researcher

to it, and we were able to connect, which led to us continuing this work with the Sendai Philharmonic later."

"This resonated with our listeners, and in 2012 we held the "Connected Hearts, Combined Power Recovery Concert" in support of the Sendai Philharmonic, which was an idea we came up with at OTTAVA. The concert has been held annually, and LOGISTEED became a special supporter as of 2023. In addition, after the coronavirus pandemic, we also launched a Webinar called "OTTAVA Accademia" as the suggestion of our listeners. Our presenters give lectures, offering diverse sessions on music with famous musicians in Japan as our guests. Thanks to LOGISTEED, this class is offered free of charge at present."

"I've been involved with radio for 40 years, and my feeling is that radio as a form of media is really just a shared experience with our listeners. We get a warm reception from our "Concert for Recovery" listeners who first heard it on the radio. We've had various ideas coming from our listeners on how we should continue to operate. We communicate with our listeners over the phone and by e-mail, and that relationship of trust is a special one." Mr. Saito plans to continue to bring classical music to his listeners and forge ever stronger ties with them.



Topics

A business partnership on joint operation of self-driving multi-axial trailer—Building a collaborative system with social infrastructure—

Utoku and LOGISTEED have entered into a business partnership contract designed to boost operational efficiency by way of joint operations in the transport sector using a self-driving multi-axial trailer.



LOGISTEED's "multi-carrier"

Local IT subsidiary established in Selangor state, Malaysia

LOGISTEED Solutions, Ltd. has established LOGISTEED Solutions Asia-Pacific Sdn. Bhd. in the state of Selangor, Malaysia, launching operations in January 2024.

New Warehouse in Mumbai—The Second Multipurpose Logistics Center in India—

Flyjac Logistics Pvt. Ltd. (India) has opened a new warehouse at the Mumbai logistics center in Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.

The newly-opened warehouse is a multipurpose logistics center (MPLC*) designed to accommodate a wide swathe of customers. It is located in a new urban area of Mumbai, one of India's leading commercial cities.



*Multipurpose Logistics Center (MPLC): A logistics center that enables us to provide various services as a hub center for 3PL operations, freight forwarding, and domestic transportation.

LOGISTEED receives grade of A- on CDP Climate Change Report for fourth consecutive year

LOGISTEED received a grade of A- (leadership level) for four consecutive years from the CDP, an international environmental non-profit organization. The company's initiatives and information disclosure have once again been recognized as excellent in the Climate Report 2023.



Celebration Commemorating First LNG Shipment

LOGISTEED North Japan, Ltd. received an order for transport of LNG (liquefied natural gas) from Hokkaido LNG Co. Ltd. A commemorative ceremony was held on the date of the first shipment, which was November 30, 2023, from the Ishikari Shipment Center at the Ishikari LNG base.



LNG transport vehicle

Patent acquired for SSCV®-Safety's predictive system

LOGISTEED acquired a patent for the SSCV®-Safety—a safe driving management solution system—for its function as a system to predict driver accidents.



VANTEC AND VANTEC EAST Hold Ceremony for the Completion of Solar Power System—Disaster Reduction Agreement Signed with Kaminokawa Locality—

VANTEC CORPORATION and Vantec East Logistics Corporation held a ceremony to commemorate the completion of solar power equipment at the VANTEC East Tochigi office. At the same time, a disaster prevention agreement was signed with the Kaminokawa municipality.



Exhibit at the 2024 Sapporo Snow Festival

Over the period of February 4-11, LOGISTEED presented a small snow sculpture along with a patent booth at the Odori venue of the 2024 Sapporo Snow Festival.



Illuminated show snow sculpture

Collaboration on the train-on-the-road observation project

On April 27, LOGISTEED West Japan, Ltd. held our train-on-the-road observation project for the third time since 2019, drawing in approximately 50,000 people—including employees and their families as well as railway fans—to watch from the side of the road. The starting ceremony, which was held at the front gate of the Hitachi, Ltd. Kasado Service Office, featured the two lead train cars of the inter-city express EMU3000 loaded onto a trailer for export to Taiwan by LOGISTEED. The cargo was transported approximately 3.3 kilometers round-trip from the front gate of the Kasado Service Office to the south entrance of JR kudamatsu Station.



Exhibiting at Transport Logistics DX Expo 2024

Over the three-day period of May 29th through May 31st, LOGISTEED exhibited at the Transport Logistics DX Expo 2024 at Tokyo Big Sight. The space was full to the brim with IT and digital solutions designed to resolve transport and distribution problems. We introduced the three solutions comprising the SSCV® (Smart & Safety Connected Vehicle) transport digital platform.



Akita R&D Center Established

LOGISTEED Solutions, Ltd. has established the Akita R&D Center in Akita City, with an opening ceremony held on March 5th. This Center has two areas for employees to relax—one is the lounge, which offers an open feel and casual atmosphere, as well as the "Laboratory," where people can come to concentrate on their work during office hours. There is also a more formal meeting room, which features ample Akira Cedar for a warm touch.



Features added to SSCV-Safety Driving Risk Determination Mode

LOGISTEED has developed the SSCV®-Safety system, which is a safe driving management solution system using technologies to measure driver health information on a daily basis. We have now added a new feature to this system designed to assess increased driving risks.



LOGISTEED named Excellent Business under the FY2023 EcoShip Modal Shift Project

Modal Shift Project, which is managed by the EcoShip Modal Shift Executive Committee. The company was also selected as an EcoMark Excellent Business for its contribution to the modal shift, particularly for oceangoing transport, which was where VANTEC stood out amongst the other award recipients.



LOGISTEED collaborates with Matsudo City on Spring Youth Education Workshop

On April 13th, the LOGISTEED Track & Field Club sent lecturers to Matsudo City, Chiba Prefecture, to provide some guidance on how to run faster—as a strategy just prior to athletic meets—at this year's Spring Youth Education Workshop. Some of our lecturers have been working on this same project since its inception in FY2015. Some 84 kids participated, representing grades 3-6 in Matsudo City elementary schools. The lectures included information on basic physical movement and training methodology as the foundations of running.



Spring Youth Education Workshop

LOGISTEED West Japan, Ltd. wins in National Forklift Driving Contest (Regular Division)

Nakano Yuki (Yamaguchi) of LOGISTEED West Japan placed first in the Regular Division of the 38th Forklift Driving Contest, held in Aichi Prefecture on September 30th-October 1st, 2023, and at the same time claimed the Minister of Health, Labor, and Welfare Award. When asked about the event, he responded in a happy tone. At first Mr. Nakano decided to participate simply out of curiosity, starting with the last Contest (2022) as well as the National Championships. During this time, he was unable to improve his standings in the academic component, placing 5th. "Until then, I had thought it was good enough if I did well on the driving part, and I didn't try very hard with the academic component."

This time, Mr. Nakano tells us about how he studied on his own for the academic component of this event, enabling him to score 288 out of 300 points—which led to his victory. In addition, he got a perfect score of 100 on the inspections skill, and 580 out of 600 on driving skills.

"I don't remember the driving skill component, maybe because I was nervous. The reason I was able to get a high score was that I practiced hard enough to create muscle memory. I was so happy that I got goosebumps when my name was read last—as the winner. I am grateful for the guidance I received from previous competitors ahead of the competition, and to my colleagues for the reduction in my workload so that I could practice more," says Mr. Nakano. Asked about his goal from here on out, he remarked: "My junior employees at my workplace will be participating in the event next time, which means my role in the future will be a supportive one. Also, I have the opportunity to drive a truck in the future, I'd like to try my hand at the National Truck Driver Contest. But I'll have to start with getting my license (laughs)."



LOGISTEED West Japan, Ltd. takes second place in 4-Ton Category of the National Truck Driver Contest

Yokoi Hiroaki (Kyoto) of LOGISTEED West Japan, Ltd. placed second in the 4-Ton Category of the 55th National Truck Driver Contest, held October 21st-22nd, 2023 in Ibaraki Prefecture. We asked him to look back on the competition and also to tell us about his goals for the future. Prior to joining LOGISTEED West Japan five years ago, he worked in heating and air conditioning. He then came to admire the truck drivers who carries heating and air conditioning equipment. "That made me think that I wanted to be part of the transport industry, and I started working on my license. Later, when I was looking for a job, I heard that LOGISTEED was focused on the Truck Driver Contest, and that many of their employees placed very well in the contest, or

even won. That's when I decided I wanted to join LOGISTEED."

He competed in the contest for the first time last year. First he won in the Kyoto contest, proceeding to the national contest from there. He scored a total of 972 points out of 1000 in the academic and skill components at the national level. "There was a difference of just seven points between myself and the winner, who scored 979 points. I needed just 28 more points for a full score, 15 of which I lost on the academic component. I missed three questions. And though I studied with the intention of getting a perfect score of 1,000, I was nervous, and maybe I lost a little ground because of that, which meant I missed out on first place as well as the Prime Minister's Award."



Asked about his future goals, Mr. Yokoi remarked, "My goal is to compete in the next contest, take first place at the national level, and to claim the Prime Minister's Award. I really appreciate my colleagues for taking up the slack when I was attending training camp, and to all those who cheered me on. To answer to their expectations, I intend to keep up my record of safe driving, and to get ready for the next competition."



Naha Container Yard



Trucks at Service Area

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Cover photo

Irabu-Ohashi Bridge (Okinawa)



Meishin Expressway (Osaka)

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