

Japan Focus



*Consulate General of Japan, Los Angeles
Japan Information & Culture Center
May 2021, Vol. 13, Issue 5*



Foreign Minister Motegi in Europe

Foreign Minister MOTEGI Toshimitsu visited Europe from April 29 to May 8, a trip that included his attendance at the Meeting of Group of Seven Foreign and Development Ministers and the 7th Meeting of Ministers of Foreign

Affairs of the Visegrad Group (V4) plus Japan. He also attended numerous bilateral meetings with his counterparts from Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the U.K., India, Australia, Italy, South Korea, France, EU, Germany, Canada, Poland, the Slovak Republic, Hungary and the Czech Republic.



Foreign Min, USTR Tai Discuss Vaccines

On May 19, Foreign Minister Motegi spoke on the phone with Ambassador Katherine C. Tai, United States Trade Representative, about intellectual property protection of COVID-19 vaccines. Motegi noted Japan's position of placing importance on promptly realizing the expansion of international production of vaccines, and the assurance of fair and equitable access. Furthermore, Japan intends to proceed

with initiatives such as contributing to the COVAX Facility. The two agreed that Japan and the US would cooperate closely regarding international initiatives on vaccines.



JAXA Astronaut Returns to Earth

Having completed his long-duration mission on the International Space Station, Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Astronaut NOGUCHI Soichi returned safely to Earth aboard The Crew Dragon spacecraft, which landed on May 2 off the coast of Panama City, Florida.



Latest on Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic Torch Relay continues to make its way across Japan. Watch the live stream [HERE](#). On May 21, the International Olympic Committee's Coordination Commission for the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 concluded its final meeting before the Games, affirming that all stakeholders are looking forward to holding safe and secure Games.



Latest on COVID-19 in Japan

Japan's Declaration of the State of Emergency in response to COVID-19 is in place as of May 24 in the following prefectures: Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Aichi, Fukuoka, Hokkaido, Okayama, Hiroshima and Okinawa.

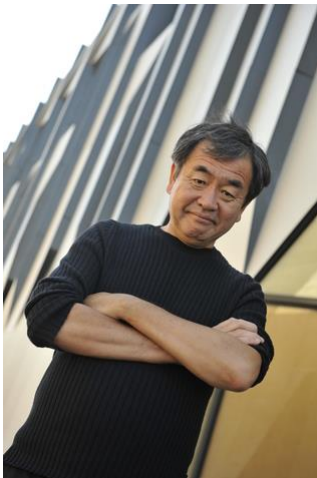
As of May 28, COVID-19 deaths in the US stood at 180.75 per 100,000, while the figure for Japan was at 10.05 per 100,000, according to data from Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center.



[Ambassador of Japan to the US to Visit Los Angeles Area in June](#)

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the US TOMITA Koji is scheduled to visit the Los Angeles area in mid-June, with stops on his itinerary to include the Richard Nixon Foundation's "Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Signing of the Okinawa Reversion Agreement" and the

Port of Los Angeles. Read more about Amb. Tomita by clicking the headline.



Credit: J.C.Carbonne

[The World of Kengo Kuma - New Form of Encounter Between Tradition and Modernity in Architecture](#)

JAPAN HOUSE Los Angeles and the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles will host an online conversation with [world-acclaimed architect Kengo Kuma](#), who believes that architecture is something that designs the way we live and work. In these unprecedented times where humanity must address global climate change, natural disasters and the

COVID-19 pandemic, what are the roles architecture can play in order for us to coexist with nature? At this special webinar, Kuma will reflect on some of his major works, including the Japan National Stadium completed in November 2019, which will be

featured at the upcoming Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, and discuss the themes and messages conveyed through his designs. To register, click [HERE](#).

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

The City of Los Angeles commemorated Asian Pacific American Heritage Month throughout May [with a variety of programs](#) (culturela.org). Watch the Opening Ceremony video [HERE](#).

To respond to the recent rise in anti-Asian hate incidents, City of Los Angeles resources can be found here: [Stop Hate Resource Hub | Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department](#) (lacity.org). Read more regarding the increase in Anti-Asian incidents, the Consulate General of Japan has shared its concerns with law enforcement and elected officials. Learn more [HERE](#).

Consul General Muto Recognized As "Making Waves" Honoree for Wide Community Outreach Efforts

Since arriving to the region in August 2019, Consul General MUTO Akira has spearheaded the Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles' efforts to reach out to different communities in the Greater Los Angeles area, including the [Armenian community](#), the [Mexican](#) community, the [Jewish](#) community, the [African American](#) community, and the Asian American Business Platform through World Trade Center Los Angeles.

As a result of such efforts, Consul General MUTO was recognized as one of 94.7 The Wave's Making Waves honorees for Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, and [he spoke with 94.7 The Wave morning personality Pat Prescott](#) about his focus on promoting mutual understanding with different communities. Other honorees include **US**

Senator Mazie K. Hirono of Hawaii, who sponsored the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act that passed in the US Senate in April to address a rise in hate crimes against Asian American and Pacific Islander communities; **actor/author/activist George Takei**, who has raised awareness about the history of Japanese Americans through his appearances, writings and performances; **comedian and actress Sherry Cola** who is making a name for herself in the entertainment world; and author **Jesse Q. Sutanto**, whose women's fiction *Dial A for Aunties* had its film rights acquired by Netflix.



creating the hydrogen future together

[Role of Hydrogen Energy in a Nutshell! New Video](#)

The Consulate General of Japan has produced a new video, in cooperation with private companies and government agencies, which succinctly details the creation of a hydrogen energy sector and the creation of a Hydrogen Society, both in Japan and in collaboration with partners in southern California and Los Angeles. An exciting example of how our nations are, in real time, undeniably improving the world together. Feel free to view and share this compelling new video above.



Car Companies Pursue Another Type of Hydrogen Vehicle!

Compared to gasoline or diesel, hydrogen combustion is effectively emissions free. In order to leverage already developed existing technology chains and employment, Japanese firms are exploring the possibilities of fueling internal combustion engines with hydrogen, and are seeking a proof of concept in the high powered and demanding world of competitive auto racing – a move particularly supported by Toyota President, Akio Toyoda.

Starting at the grueling Fuji Super TEC 24 Hours race, Japan's first hydrogen powered race car was fielded by Toyota May 21st-23rd. This event marked the first time in the world that carbon-neutral fuel (hydrogen) was used in a 24-hour endurance race; and the fuel was also notable for having been created at the world's largest green hydrogen production site, the FH2R project in Namie Town, Fukushima Prefecture.



Latest Report on Foreign Direct Investment Release and Webinar

The World Trade Center Los Angeles is hosting a June 2nd webinar and release event for the latest iteration of the much-anticipated annual report on Foreign Direct Investment in California. Detailing the important contributions made by Japan affiliated firms, and top foreign direct investor nations from all over the world, this will be an important event for anyone with an interest in global business and California's important role on the world stage. Click the title for the registration link.



California - Japan
Sister Cities Network

California-Japan Sister Cities Network Holds 2021 Spring Virtual Workshop

The California-Japan Sister Cities Network

(CJSCN), which supports sister city and friendship city relationships between California and Japan to cultivate international friendships, recently held its Spring 2021 Workshop "Citizen Diplomacy through Technology and Innovation," co-hosted with the Consuls General of Japan in San Francisco and Los Angeles. California State Senate President Pro Tempore Toni Atkins addressed the virtual workshop, calling the sister city relationship between San Diego (in California's 39th Senate District) and the city of Yokohama, Japan, a model of goodwill, diplomacy and friendship. Watch video of the workshop by clicking the title.



[Terasaki Budokan, Japanese Consulate Showcase Youth and Sports To Promote Tokyo 2020 Games](#)

With the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games coming up this summer, the Terasaki Budokan and Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles have teamed up to present a new video, "Celebrating Youth and Sports Ahead of Tokyo 2020" that celebrates youth and sports, and the friendship between Japan and Los Angeles.

[Japanese Gardens and Tea Rooms](#)

We are highlighting Japanese gardens/tea rooms in our jurisdiction. Please check each location's website for operating hours and/or reservations as well as current offerings.

[SuihoEn The Japanese Garden](#)



Credit: SuihoEn The Japanese Garden

Located in Van Nuys, CA, the Japanese Garden is a public garden that features a dry Zen meditation garden containing Tortoise Island, a three-Buddha arrangement of stones, and a wisteria arbor at the end of the Plover Path. The garden also features a "wet-strolling" garden, with waterfalls, lakes and streams, abundant greenery, and stone lanterns. There is also the Shoin Building with a teahouse and adjacent tea garden. Adjacent to a water reclamation plant, the Garden's purpose was "to demonstrate a positive use of reclaimed water in what is generally agreed to be a delicate environment," according to the Garden's website.



Looking for something entertaining or informative about Japan? Look no further, the [Consulate General of Japan in Los Angeles' events calendar](#) includes information about virtual events related to Japan, as well as links to virtual museums.



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