

PLAZA NEWS LETTER(February, 2023)

This year is called the Year of the Rabbit in Japan, but in Vietnam and Thailand, it is the Year of the Cat. Since there is no cat year in the Japanese zodiac, it was a new discovery that there is a country with a cat year.

The Plaza received 62 consultations in December. We share some of them with advice from the Plaza.

Q : I am an international student with a scholarship and taking Japanese lessons at my uni. Is it possible for me to have a part-time job on weekends to brush up my Japanese and get used to Japanese society?

A : If you submit an application for “permission to engage in activities other than that permitted under the status of residence” to the Immigration, you can work up to 28 hours per week.

Q : I am an international student. My child came to Kumamoto with me and will be a high school student this April. I would like to know if there is information and assistance available to help my child get into a high school.

A : If your child has graduated from junior high school in your own country, you cannot enter junior high school again in Japan. The high school with Japanese language support in Kumamoto is Shugakukan High School in Yatsushiro City.

In addition, foreign students (those who have been in Japan for less than 6 years) who wish to take the entrance exam for Kumamoto prefectural high schools may take by special measures (taking 3 subjects + interview + essay) or special consideration (ruby writing, extended exam time, etc.) depending on their insufficiency in Japanese language. However, these may not apply depending on the age at the time of arrival in Japan or other criteria.

Q : I am a foreigner. I am having trouble making a living, is there anywhere I can borrow money?

A : Previously, the Kumamoto Pref. Council of Social Welfare provided small loans on the grounds of COVID-19. However, all of its loans were terminated at the end of Sep 2022. Please contact the Kumamoto City Livelihood Assistance Fund office.

Q : I received an application form for Emergency assistance benefit for price hikes in electricity, gas, and food, but I am not sure how to fill it out. Can you help?

A : We supported to fill out the form together.

Q : I have been told by my child's school to submit a paperwork. Please let me know what it's about and how to fill it out.

A : We explained the contents and provided assistance in writing it.

If you are unsure of the contents or how to write notices in reply to letters from school or city hall, the plaza can help you.

If you have any problems, please contact the Kumamoto City Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents.



SETSUBUN

◆What is SETSUBUN?

February 3 is SETSUBUN. It is an event to drive away demons by throwing dried soybeans and welcome the new year. The beans are thrown outside while saying "Oni wa soto (The devil is outside)".

Next, the beans are thrown inside the house while saying, "Fuku wa uchi (good fortune and happiness will come to the home of those who live within)".



◆Why do we say these words?

「Oni wa soto」・・・ Demons are bad things. In the past, invisible bad things were called demons. They said that illnesses were also caused by demons. Therefore, we say these words hoping to drive out the bad stuff.

「Fuku wa uchi」・・・ Blessings are good things. It also means happiness. We want good things and happiness come to our home. Therefore, we say these words to bring blessedness home.

We say these words and throw beans to pray for a healthy and happy life throughout the year. When the bean-throwing ceremony is over, people eat number of beans of their age.

◆Food eaten during SETSUBUN

On SETSUBUN, we eat "EHOMAKI". EHOMAKI is sushi wrapped in nori (seaweed).

Seven different fillings are rolled with rice and nori. There are no specific fillings, but cucumbers and egg rolls are commonly included.

The reason for the seven different fillings is said to represent the seven gods called "SHICHIFUKUJIN (Seven gods of good fortune)". Each year, we eat a whole roll facing a predetermined direction called "EHO(The most auspicious direction of the year)". 2023's EHO is south-southeast. Do not speak nor make a sound when eating. This is because it is said that if you eat a whole roll without speaking out loud, your wish will come true.



Ms. Le Thi Tram, representative of the association, will introduce the newly established Vietnamese Association in Kumamoto. .

Vietnamese Association in Kumamoto



The Vietnamese Association in Kumamoto was established in April 2022 to connect Vietnamese living in Kumamoto and help each other.

A activities so far include the introduction of the Mid-Autumn Festival "Tet Trung thu" in September for Vietnamese children born in Japan, and an exchange sports event with Vietnamese, Japanese, and people from other countries in October. During the JLPT exam in December, we provide transportation between the station and the exam site, and also teach Vietnamese to Vietnamese children once a month. Badminton club activities are also held every Saturday and Sunday in Yatsushiro, Tamana, Ozu, and Nagasu.

From Sat, January 21 to Sun, February 5, the Kumamoto city International Center will display Vietnamese style Chinese New Year decorations. On Sat, February 25, there will be Vietnamese dance performances, and booths for Vietnamese gourmet, like pho and banh mi, will be set up. Come experience Vietnam! (Check the center's website for further details)



Facebook



Information on Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

The Plaza offers life affairs support in multiple languages such as English, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Nepali, etc. Professional consultations including legal affairs, residence status issues, job hunting, and housing are also provided.

February Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30	31	01 •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	02 •Korean Consultation	03 •Spanish Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	04	05 •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation
06	07 •Chinese Consultation	08 •Job Consultation •Mental Counseling •Tagalog Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	09 •Korean Consultation	10 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	11 National Day	12 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation
13 Closed	14 •Chinese Consultation	15 •Housing Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation	16 •Korean Consultation	17 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	18 •Free Legal Consultation •Life Consultation in Chinese	19 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Immigrational Consultation •Vietnamese Consultation •Nepal Consultation •Educational Consultation
20	21 •Chinese Consultation	22 •Life Consultation in Chinese •German Consultation •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students	23 The Emperor's Birthday •Korean Consultation	24 •Life Consultation in Chinese •English Consultation	25	26 •Life Consultation in Chinese •Educational Consultation
28 Closed		note: Consultations 1:00p.m~5:00p.m (apart from the ones below) •Life Consultation in Chinese 1:00pm~6:00pm •One-stop Consultation Service for International Students 2:00pm~5:00pm •Immigrational Consultation •Housing Consultation 1:00pm~4:00pm •Job Consultation 10:00am~6:00pm •Free Legal Consultation 2:00pm~4:00pm (Reservation required) •Mental Counseling 3:30pm~5:30pm •Educational Consultation 1:00pm~3:00pm (Reservation required)				

※ Consultation service could be cancelled due to consultant's personal reasons.
Please e-mail or call us beforehand to check if the consultant is available.

Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents' Facebook

We regularly update information useful to you.

Follow us and be one of the first one to be informed!



Plaza's FB

We are offering variety of information useful to your life. Please check us!



Our website



Our Life affairs guidance

Kumamoto Consultation and Support Plaza for Foreign Residents

Location: 2nd floor of Kumamoto City International Center

Address: 4-18 Hanabata-Cho, Chuo-Ku, Kumamoto City, 860-0806

Tel: 096-359-4995

E-mail: soudan@kumamoto-if.or.jp

Opening hours: Between 10 am and 6 pm

Closed on second and fourth Mondays and between December 29 and January 3

★ If second or fourth Monday is a national holiday, the plaza will be closed the following day instead.

