

[CONTENTS, SEPTEMBER 2018]

1. OCCI DONATES EDUCATIONAL ROBOTS TO SCHOOLS IN OSAKA CITY

2. CHAIRMAN OZAKI WELCOMES THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, SEEKS SUPPORT FOR OSAKA'S BID TO HOST THE 2025 WORLD EXPO

3. 2018 BUSINESS PARTNER CITY ROUNDTABLE HELD IN OSAKA

4. VIETNAM'S FRIENDSHIP ORDER CONFERRED UPON VICE CHAIRMAN NISHIMURA

5. SIGN UP FOR THE 2018 JOINT CHAMBER INTERNATIONAL MEISHI EXCHANGE EVENT

6. THE 70TH BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC TREND SURVEY

7. REPORT ON VIP VISITORS



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1. OCCI DONATES EDUCATIONAL ROBOTS TO SCHOOLS IN OSAKA CITY

On August 29, the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), donated 200 “Codey Rocky” robots to schools in Osaka City.



“Codey Rocky” is an educational robot with built-in AI, developed by Makeblock Co. Ltd. (Head Office: Shenzhen, Guangdong Province, China). The donation is intended to support programming education in primary schools.

Makeblock is a global manufacturer of STEM oriented products. Over 20,000 schools in 140 countries have adopted its products in their classrooms. When the OCCI delegation headed by Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki was dispatched to China's Pearl River Delta Economic Zone (Greater Shenzhen) in July, the group visited

Makeblock’s Head Office. Mr. Jasen Wang, the CEO of the company, offered to donate 50 “Codey Rocky” robots to help promote STEM education in Osaka.

In response, OCCI purchased 50 “Codey Rocky” robots, matching Mr. Wang’s donation with an equal donation of its own, thus doubling the total number of robots donated. Ten companies, including members of the delegation, offered to purchase an additional 100. A total of 200 “Codey Rocky” robots were donated to schools in Osaka City.

The member companies that support this initiative are as follows: ECR, Itochu, Osaka Gas, Golden Bridge, Konica Minolta, Daiwa House Industry, Togawa Rubber, Hitachi Zosen, Sumitomo Mitsui Banking, Union

Under the new educational guidelines that will come into effect in 2020, computer programming will be a compulsory subject taught in Japanese primary schools. However, concerns have been raised over whether primary school teachers can teach programming, and whether there will be enough budget to cover the cost of equipment and course material purchases. The Osaka Municipal Board of Education plans to use these robots during teachers’ training sessions this year. Starting next year, the robots will be introduced to municipal primary schools on a trial basis.

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2. CHAIRMAN OZAKI WELCOMES THE PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC, SEEKS SUPPORT FOR OSAKA’ S BID TO HOST THE 2025 WORLD EXPO

On August 21, Mr. Marat Sharshekeev, President of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Kyrgyz Republic, visited Japan, accompanied by his wife. A banquet was hosted by Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki on the evening of their arrival.

Chairman Ozaki commented on the strong ties shared by Japan and the Kyrgyz Republic, making reference to the year 2017, which marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Chairman Ozaki urged Mr. Sharshekeev to support Osaka’s bid to host the 2025 World Expo.

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3. 2018 BUSINESS PARTNER CITY ROUNDTABLE HELD IN OSAKA

On August 30, the Business Partner City (BPC) Roundtable was held in Osaka. The Business Partner City (BPC) network is a circle established by the Osaka municipal government in 1988, to help promote business interaction within the dynamic Asia-Pacific region. This year marks the 30th anniversary of the BPC network. The theme of the conference was “Creation of Business



Innovation and Strengthening of International Competitiveness in Business Partner Cities.” The event attracted representatives from 10 cities around the world, including Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Shanghai, Ho Chi Minh, Melbourne, and Tianjin. Mr. Hiroyuki Fukano, Executive Councilor of the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI), attended the BPC Roundtable, and introduced OCCI’s initiatives to spur innovation, such as “Xport (Cross Port),” open innovation hub launched in the urban city of Osaka this spring, a joint project undertaken with the Osaka Institute of Technology.

To coincide with this occasion, Osaka Business and Investment Center (O-BIC) (Office: OCCI International Division) hosted a promotion event, which was attended by 41 participants who work at international companies and government agencies. O-BIC gave a presentation, introducing Osaka’s investment environment and its initiatives in a bid to host the 2025 World Expo.

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4. VIETNAM'S FRIENDSHIP ORDER CONFERRED UPON VICE CHAIRMAN NISHIMURA

On August 31, Mr. Teiichi Nishimura, Vice Chairman of OCCI and Chairman of the Japan-Vietnam Kansai Friendship Association, attended the ceremony with his wife celebrating Vietnam's 73rd National Day, and received the Friendship Order, the country's highest order of honor. Mr. Nishimura received the honor in recognition of his significant contributions to the friendship between Japan and Vietnam, including his role in fostering collaboration and mutual understanding, his participation in a trade delegation to Vietnam, and his support for Vietnamese students in Japan.



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5. SIGN UP FOR THE 2018 JOINT CHAMBER INTERNATIONAL MEISHI EXCHANGE EVENT

On October 4, the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and the American Chamber of Commerce in Japan (ACCIJ)-Kansai will host the 2018 Joint Chamber International Meishi Exchange Event. Now in its ninth year, it is among the biggest international networking events in Kansai, bringing together members of the international and local communities, including foreign missions, business groups, and international companies in Kansai.

The event is supported by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Osaka and the National Chambers of Commerce and Industry of various countries, including China, India, Israel, the United Kingdom, Australia, Austria, the Netherlands, Canada, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Sweden, Taiwan, Germany, Brazil, and France.

This year, the Ireland Japan Chamber of Commerce (IJCC) will also support the event. U.S. Consul General Karen Kelly will be in attendance as a guest. Bring along your colleagues and friends to join us for an evening

of networking!

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6. THE 70TH BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC TREND SURVEY

* This survey was taken on May, 2018, before the typhoon and earthquake which occurred in the Kansai Region. After the typhoon Jebi has forced the closure of the Kansai International Airport from Sep. 4th as of now, all flight are back in operation, just leaving part of the bridge to be repaired, which will cause some attention in transporting to the airport from the mainland.

The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) and the Kansai Economic Federation (Kankeiren) released the Business and Economic Trend Survey, a joint survey conducted every quarter of the year, to provide a set of data necessary to understand member companies' assessments of the economic conditions and the actual condition of their corporate management. This survey was conducted from mid to late May, targeting 1,632 companies, and receiving responses from 398 companies (valid response rate: 24.4%).

According to the survey, the BSI (Business Survey Index)* for the domestic business conditions in the April-June quarter stands at 18.5, indicating a positive outlook for the seventh consecutive quarter. The BSIs for the July-September and October-December quarters are expected to be 23.2 and 22.6 respectively, signaling optimism among the member companies. The BSI for their own company's business situation stands at 2.3, indicating a positive outlook for the seventh consecutive quarter, which is for the first time in almost eleven years. The BSI reading for small to medium-sized companies remains firmly positive for the fifth consecutive quarter, which is the first time since the survey was launched.

* The BSI measures the percentage of firms that expect the business environment to improve from the previous quarter minus the percentage that expect it to decline.

Next, when asked whether products are priced appropriately to reflect fair profit margins, 59.2% of the companies responded, “Generally appropriate.” However, 32.9% of the companies responded that products are priced below fair value, versus 37.7% of the companies in the manufacturing sector.

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7. REPORT ON VIP VISITORS

- 8/20 Mr. AFZANIL MD ANUAR, Malaysian Investment Development Authority Director
- 8/21 Mr. Marat Sharshekeev, President of Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kyrgyz Republic
- 8/31 Mr. Vu Tuan Hai, Consul General of Consulate-General of Vietnam in Osaka
- 9/6 Mr. N. Kumar, President of Indo-Japan Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- 9/11 Mr. B. Shyam, Consul General of India, Osaka-Kobe
- 9/16 H.E. Mr. Roberto AMPUERO, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile
- 9/16 H.E. Mr. Gustavo AYARES, Ambassador of Chile to Japan



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Information about scheduled events (in Japanese only)

: If you wish to receive information about scheduled events, please visit

<http://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/Jigyuu/Sonota/annai.htm>

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Alternatively, please check out information about scheduled seminars and

other events on the OCCI's website (in Japanese only).

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