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1. MIMOSA DAY CEREMONY HELD ON MARCH 8, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



The Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OCCI) held a Mimosa Day ceremony on March 8 jointly with Cultural Association Between Japan and Italy, the Italian Consulate General in Osaka, and the City of Osaka.

March 8 is International Women's Day as designated by the United Nations (UN), and in Italy, the day is known as Mimosa Day, when women are presented with bouquets of mimosa as an expression of continuing gratitude. The OCCI held the ceremony also to raise public awareness about the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In the presence of Mr. Luigi Diodati, the Consul General of

Italy in Osaka, a mini opera concert and a bouquet presentation ceremony were held in front of full-blown mimosa flowers.



After Mr. Diodati’s greeting, Mr. Hiroshi Ozaki, the Chairman of the OCCI, Mr. Minoru Furukawa, Vice Chairman of the OCCI, Mr. Diodati and others presented bouquets of mimosa to various women, including Ms. Emiko Kawamukai of Saraya Co., Ltd., who received the 3rd Osaka

Sakuyahime Award, Ms. Noriko Sogawa of Hitachi Zosen Corporation, and Ms. Yoko Nakatani of the Italian Consulate General in Osaka. Mimosa flowers were also presented to a hundred attendees.

In a talk with Chairman Ozaki after the ceremony, Mr. Diodati extended his congratulations on Osaka’s successful bid to host the 2025 World Expo and expressed expectations that the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement will encourage the growth of trade between Italy and Japan.

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2. “MADE IN JAPAN B TO B MEETING” EVENTS FOR BUSINESS MATCHING BETWEEN OVERSEAS BUYERS (THAILAND, VIETNAM, CHINA) AND SMES IN OSAKA

The OCCI annually invites overseas buyers to Osaka and holds the “Made in Japan B to B Meeting,” an event for business matching between buyers and SMEs in Osaka. This event is held to provide SMEs with opportunities to promote their high-quality products, technologies, and services to overseas buyers. In the past, more than 820 business meetings were held with buyers invited from all over the world.

In an event taking place over two days from March 6 to 7, 120 business meetings were held between seven Thai and Vietnamese companies looking for suppliers of food and commodities made in Japan and 52 Japanese companies. In another business matching event on March 12, 133 business meetings were held between 11 Chinese companies including those with a base in Osaka, which were looking for suppliers of elderly-related products, cosmetics, and food, and 50 Japanese companies. As the result of brisk business meetings in these two events, 14 deals are expected to be signed and 136 discussions will continue.



An overseas buyer who participated in one of the events seemed to be impressed with the accuracy of the prearranged matching, saying, “I have never experienced such a meaningful business matching event. All the meetings I had were worthwhile. I want to participate in this event again in the future.” A staff member of a Japanese company also highly appreciated the event by saying, “The efficient scheduling of business meetings was very helpful.”

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3. KANSAI/MONTREAL AI INNOVATION FORUM

On March 19, the OCCI held the Kansai/Montreal AI Innovation Forum, to which five AI startups were invited from the Chamber of Commerce of Metropolitan Montreal (CCMM), with which the OCCI has a partnership.



At the beginning of the forum, Mr. Tomita, the Chairman of the International Business Committee (the General Manager of Marubeni Corporation Osaka Branch) made a speech and said, “In recent years, the creation of new business using AI has drawn increasing attention. I hope today’s forum will become an opportunity to encourage interaction between Kansai and Canada in various fields.” Mr. Jobin, Vice-President, Business Service, CCMM responded by saying, “More than 300 AI researchers are clustered in our area. Interaction with Kansai is more than welcome.”

The mission from Montreal made presentations on AI research institutions, including the Institute for Data Valorization (IVADO), and AI data solutions applicable to medical services and other areas. From Japan, 65 persons participated in this event. Following some presentations, 30 business meetings were held between Canadian companies and 18 Japanese companies based in Osaka. The OCCI will dispatch a business mission to Montreal and the USA in March 2020 to interact with local startup companies and research institutes.

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4. MOU TO PROMOTE COOPERATION IN HEALTH, MEDICAL SERVICE, AND ELDERLY CARE INDUSTRIES SIGNED BETWEEN OCCI AND CHINA INTERNATIONAL TRADE PROMOTION COMMITTEE SHANDONG PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE



On March 26, the Japan-China Health and Elderly Care Industries Exchange Meeting was held in Osaka in the presence of Mr. Gong Zheng, the Governor of Shandong Province in China. At the meeting, the status of the elderly care industry in Shandong Province was introduced, and a memorandum of



understanding (MOU) was signed to promote cooperation in the health, medical service, and elderly care industries between the OCCI and China International Trade Promotion Committee (CCPIT) Shandong Provincial Committee. In addition, individual business meetings were held and active

business discussions were observed at the venue.

Following Governor Gong Zheng's opening speech and Chairman Hiroshi Ozaki's greeting speech, Mr. Hiroyuki Fukano, Executive Councillor and Chairman of the China Business Committee introduced the OCCI's activities for the elderly care industry. Then, to confirm the cooperative relationship between both organizations, Mr. Fukano and Mr. Yu Fenggui, the Chairman of the CCPIT Shandong Provincial Committee signed the MOU as an agreement to promote cooperation in the health and elderly care industries, which are expected to grow significantly in the future. This is the OCCI's 60th partnership with overseas economic organizations. The CCPIT Shandong Provincial Committee is equivalent to the Shandong branch of the CCPIT, which is the leading trade promotion organization in China. Following presentations by government officials about the status of the elderly care industry in Shandong Province, individual business meetings were held. A total of 22 Japanese companies seeking business opportunities with Chinese companies participated in the business meetings, in which more than 10 memorandums were signed to confirm the continuation of discussions. The OCCI will continue to support the elderly care industry to develop overseas markets.

5. REQUEST FOR COOPERATION TO REDUCE TRAFFIC BY 50% DURING THE PERIOD OF THE G20 OSAKA SUMMIT

The G20 Osaka summit will be held this coming June, 2019. Assuming about 30,000 visitors to Osaka, including VIPs and staff from 37 countries and organizations as well as media representatives, large-scale traffic restrictions will be implemented from Thursday June 27 to Sunday June 30 around INTEX OSAKA (the venue of the summit), hotels where the VIPs will stay, and Kansai International Airport, as well as expressways and major roads in and around Osaka City that connect between these places.

To reduce overall traffic during the period by 50%, we would like to ask your cooperation by shifting traffic to late at night or early in the morning, or reducing the number of vehicles used (e.g. 4 company cars to 2 cars or 20 delivery trucks to 10 trucks).

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6. CONSULTATION AND DOCUMENTATION SERVICES CONCERNING TPP11 AND JAPAN-EU EPA BECOME AVAILABLE

The Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP or TPP11) and the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) came into effect in December 2018 and February 2019, respectively. Unlike conventional EPAs, these ones do not allow a chamber of commerce to issue certificates of origin because they adopt a system of self-certification, whereby companies (exporters, importers or producers) must check the originating status of products and issue documents by themselves.

A reduction or exemption of import tax is applied to most products exported from Japan to the countries which have signed these EPAs; however, to issue the origin certification document required for the reduction or exemption, exporters need to check the HS (CN) codes and tariff rates of exported products as well as conformance to regulations that differ depending on the item. Also, when exporters are contacted by the customs office of the importing country to check the authenticity of the documents issued by them, they have to respond on their own responsibility.

To relieve even a little of the anxiety felt by companies about these procedures, the OCCI started its TPP11

& Japan-EU EPA consultation service on April 1. Also, on April 8, the OCCI started a documentation service, whereby the OCCI creates origin certification documents on behalf of companies based on information provided by them. While the consultation service is available free of charge, there is a fee for the documentation service (membership privileges are available). Please feel free to use these new services.

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7. REPORT ON VIP VISITORS (2019/2/20~4/22)

- 2019/2/18 H. E. Mr. Gediminas Varvuolis, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Lithuania
- 2019/2/25 H. E. Mr. William F. Hagerty, U.S. Ambassador to Japan
- 2019/3/8 Mr. Luigi Diodati, Consul General of Italy in Osaka
- 2019/3/15 Mr. Zeev Weiss, Chairman, The Israel-Japan Friendship Society and Chamber of Commerce
- 2019/3/19 Mr. David Lawson Consul General Australian Consulate General

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8. FY2019 OCCI INTERNATIONAL STAFFERS AND THEIR REGIONS

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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/mailstation/>

and submit your subscription request to OCCI Email Station.

Alternatively, please check out information about scheduled seminars and other events on the OCCI's website (in Japanese only).

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