

JATA International News Letter

August 2026

Remarks by Yuji Hara, New Chairperson of JATA

I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your continued support of JATA's activities. Regarding the Kumamoto earthquake that occurred on July 28, I would like to extend my deepest sympathies to all those affected. I can only imagine the great hardships that people in the affected areas are facing, especially amid the ongoing extreme heat. Above all, I sincerely hope that everyone affected will be able to return to their normal daily lives as soon as possible. We believe that what we can do is contribute to the recovery of disaster-stricken areas through the power of tourism. Together with JATA members and all those involved in tourism, we will join forces and do our utmost to contribute to the earliest possible recovery of the affected areas.

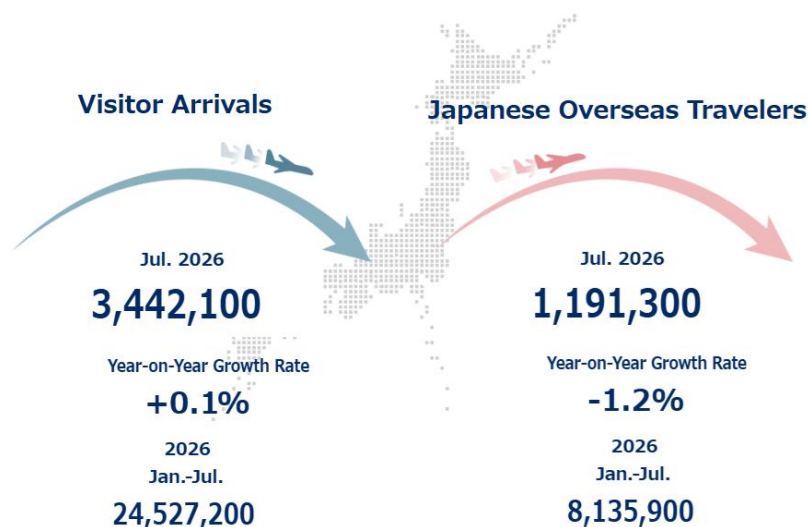
In this issue of the JATA English Newsletter, we are pleased to share some of our latest activities with you. Your feedback and opinions are highly valuable in helping us further improve our activities, so we would greatly appreciate hearing from you. We sincerely thank you for your continued support and look forward to staying connected with you.



Yuji Hara, Chairperson
Japan Association of Travel Agents

Japan Travel Market Statistics

Jul. 2026 Visitor Arrivals to Japan and Japanese Overseas Travelers



Source: JNTO statistics.

For more details please visit: <https://statistics.jnto.go.jp/en/graph/#graph--latest--figures>

JATA Overseas Allied Member (OAM) Service Satisfaction Survey

Help Us Improve Our Services — We Value Your Feedback

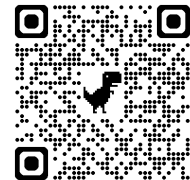
※**This survey is intended for JATA Overseas Allied Members only.**

Thank you very much for your continued support of JATA's activities.

We are conducting this survey to gain a deeper understanding of the needs of our Overseas Allied Members and to improve the services we provide. Your feedback and comments are invaluable to us, and we will use them to enhance our membership services so they are more beneficial and relevant to you. We would greatly appreciate your candid feedback to help us improve our services in the future.

Please note that your responses will be used only for the purpose of improving our services. You can access the survey through the URL below or by scanning the QR code.

<https://form.run/@jata-oam-survey>



Thank you very much for your valuable cooperation and support.

JATA's Key Activities

Outbound Travel Promotion Division

A Special Exclusive Event at Ephesus, a UNESCO World Heritage Site "Ephesus Japan Day" Makes Its Debut

JATA's Japan Outbound Tourism Council (JOTC) and its Europe Committee established the Ephesus Japan Day Executive Committee to expand outbound tourism from Japan. In collaboration with Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism (TGA), the Embassy of the Republic of Turkey in Japan, Turkish Airlines, and others, the committee hosted the inaugural "Ephesus Japan Day" on Sunday, August 2.

This event was adapted from the "Ephesus Night Museum" program, which Republic of Turkey Ministry of Culture and Tourism (TGA) has been implementing as part of its tourism promotion efforts since 2024. JATA member travel agencies developed the package, and for the first time, they organized an exclusive, private event titled "Ephesus Japan Day," open only to participants from Japan. Approximately 280 people from Japan participated.

The event featured a special show staged at the Great Theater of Ephesus, as well as the summer-only "Night Museum" illumination of the ancient ruins. Guests were also treated to a

selection of Turkish local specialties, including döner kebabs, Islak Hamburger, balık ekmek (fish sandwiches), Turkish ice cream, and drinks.

From January to June 2026, approximately 63,000 travelers from Japan visited Türkiye, representing a 31% increase compared with the same period in 2019, exceeding pre-pandemic levels.

Currently, the outbound travel is facing challenges in recovering traveler numbers to pre-pandemic levels due to various social factors, including exchange rate fluctuations and rising prices. However, this event—organized by JATA member travel agencies and open to a wide range of participants—aims to expand the traveler base while showcasing the appeal of Turkey's diverse destinations, including its World Heritage sites.



Experience a spectacular celebration of Türkiye's music and history in the ancient theater of Ephesus.



The Library of Celsus illuminated at night

JATA Inbound Tohoku Study Tour and Business Meeting Held

The JATA Inbound Travel Promotion Committee's Regional Attraction and Demand Expansion Subcommittee, with the cooperation of the Tohoku Tourism Promotion Organization, held the "JATA Inbound Tohoku Study Tour and Business Meeting" in Fukushima and Miyagi Prefectures from July 16 to 17, 2026.

The initiative was launched with the aim of promoting the regional dispersal of inbound visitors and encouraging travel throughout the Tohoku region. In collaboration with local tourism organizations and businesses, the project focused on developing wide-area and destination-based travel products and promoting them to overseas markets. By creating new travel products that showcase the unique tourism resources of each destination, the initiative seeks to attract more visitors to the Tohoku region and contribute to the long-term growth of sustainable tourism.

A total of 24 representatives from 17 companies—including members of JATA Inbound Travel Promotion Committee members and TQJ*-certified companies—participated in the study tour to explore tourism offerings and hospitality infrastructure in Fukushima and Miyagi Prefectures. Participants deepened their understanding of the region's unique attractions and story-driven tourism resources, while exploring concrete opportunities to develop travel products for inbound visitors.

On July 17, a business meeting was held at Sendai International Center, bringing together 28 representatives from 14 tourism-related organizations across the Tohoku region. The meeting provided a valuable opportunity for travel companies and local tourism operators to exchange views, discuss potential collaborations, and explore opportunities for developing and promoting new travel products. JATA will continue to strengthen collaboration between local communities and travel agencies, working to attract inbound travelers to regional areas and promote wide-area travel itineraries.

*Tour Quality Japan(TQJ) is the organization of tour operators which are qualified by "Quality Assurance System for tour operators" majored by four categories -corporate governance, service quality, CSR and sustainable tourism. All TQJ member must not only pass strict quality assurance system, but also pass a renewal audit every three years.



At the business meeting



A visit to Kanran-tei

Participation in the Japan Tourism Agency's "Tourism Resilience Working-Level Meeting 2026"

The Domestic Travel Promotion Division participated in the "Tourism Resilience Working-Level Meeting 2026," hosted by the Japan Tourism Agency and held at the Tokyo Prince Hotel on July 22, 2026.

The meeting was held in cooperation with UN Tourism, following last year's meeting in 2025. This session focused on the second pillar of the "Sendai Statement," adopted at the Tourism Resilience Summit, a ministerial-level meeting on tourism resilience in the Asia-Pacific region held in 2024: "Absorbing the Impacts of Crises and Disasters Caused by Natural Hazards, and Recovering through Adaptation and Transformation." The Japan Tourism Agency introduced an overview of related initiatives and measures. In addition, given that 2027 has been designated by UN Tourism as the "International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism," an explanation was provided regarding future initiatives aimed at further enhancing tourism resilience.

At the meeting, participants from relevant organizations in Japan and the nine ASEAN countries presented their respective initiatives and case studies, and shared best practices related to tourism resilience. JATA introduced practical examples from the travel industry, including the use of the "Tourism Industry Common Platform" to collect information on accommodation facilities during disasters, as well as initiatives incorporating a "phase-free" approach that considers disaster preparedness from the outset of normal operations.

At the networking session following the meeting, president Yuji Ebina delivered remarks and spoke about his expectations for the 2027 "International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism." The session concluded with active networking and discussions among participants. The Japan Tourism Agency plans to develop guidelines and compile a collection of case studies related to the second pillar of the Sendai Statement, "Absorbing the Impacts of Crises and Disasters Caused by Natural Hazards, and Recovering through Adaptation and Transformation." JATA's Domestic Travel Promotion Division will continue to work closely with relevant organizations to promote initiatives aimed at enhancing tourism resilience.



Presentation by the Japan Tourism Agency



Participants' group photo

Visit to the Industrial Heritage Information Centre

The International Affairs Department organized a study visit to the Industrial Heritage Information Centre for members of the PATA Japan Chapter, as well as representatives from travel companies serving on JATA's Domestic Travel Promotion Committee and Inbound Travel Promotion Committee.

The tour featured exhibits, historical materials, and videos introducing Japan's industrial heritage and the country's transition from a feudal society to a modern industrial nation during the late Edo and Meiji periods, with innovative technological advancement in heavy industries. Participants also learned about the *Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining*, gaining a deeper understanding of the role these industrial heritage sites played in Japan's modernization.

In addition, participants had the opportunity to hear directly from former residents of Hashima Island (Gunkanjima) in Nagasaki Prefecture, who shared their experiences of daily life, work, and the conditions on the island at that time. Their personal stories brought the history to life and offered participants valuable insights beyond what the exhibitions alone could provide. Participants also shared their impressions, with comments such as, "I discover something new every time I visit and am impressed on each occasion," and "I would highly recommend this place to anyone who wants to learn more about industrial heritage."

Following the visit, a Q&A session was held on topics related to accepting educational and inbound travel groups. Participants exchanged views on various aspects, including group reception arrangements, parking facilities for large buses, and multilingual support. The session provided a valuable opportunity to share practical information for utilizing the centre for educational tours and developing inbound travel programs, and it generated strong interest among the participants.



Guided tour of the exhibition.



Guided tour of the exhibition.



Guided tour of the exhibition.



Former residents sharing their experiences of life on Hashima Island

Tourism EXPO Japan Promotion Office

Introducing the Official Character of Tourism EXPO Japan!

With less than one month to go until Tourism EXPO Japan (TEJ), we're excited to announce the launch of TEJ's official character!

Official Character: HashibiRYoko

"Hashibirokou" means "shoebill" in Japanese, while "HasibiRYoko" incorporates "ryoko," the Japanese word for "travel."



ハシビリヨコ

HASHIBIRYOKO

TEJ's official character was inspired by the shoebill, known as one of the world's most motionless birds, combined with "ryoko," the Japanese word for "travel." "A bird that never moves, suddenly inspired to travel." The character embodies the excitement of travel and the anticipation of new encounters and experiences. Official HashibiRYoko merchandise will also be available at the venue. Be sure to stop by, check out the goods, and come meet HashibiRYoko in person!

TEJ has also appointed Saionji, a popular transportation and travel YouTuber, as its special influencer, with fellow YouTuber ZAKI making a special guest appearance as a friend.

Throughout the event, they will explore the venue, share their experiences and insights, and highlight the event's appeal.

Tourism Expo Japan 2026

JATA Column



In this section, we introduce useful information, practical tips, and key regulations under Japan's Travel Agency Act and related laws that may be helpful to our readers.

In the previous issue, we introduced itinerary management as one of the responsibilities of travel agencies under organized tour contracts. This time, we will focus on the Special Compensation System.

<Special Compensation System>

The Special Compensation System is a scheme under which a travel agency pays a predetermined amount of compensation or other benefits (hereinafter referred to as "compensation benefits") when a traveler suffers bodily injury or damage to personal belongings as a result of an accident occurring during participation in a package tour. The details of the system are set out in the Special Compensation Rules attached to the Standard General Conditions of Travel Agency Business. This article will provide only a brief overview.

<Bodily Injury>

Compensation applies to injuries caused by "sudden, accidental, and external events" occurring during participation in an organized tour. Therefore, illnesses, as well as lower back pain or whiplash without objective symptoms, are not covered. The amount of death compensation is set at JPY 25 million for overseas travel and JPY 15 million for domestic travel. If a traveler suffers a permanent disability as defined in the Rules, a permanent disability compensation payment will be provided, calculated by multiplying the death compensation amount by a prescribed percentage according to the degree of disability. In addition, even when an injury does not result in a permanent disability, hospitalization or outpatient treatment benefits may be provided depending on the nature and severity of the injury.

The payment of compensation benefits is subject to certain exclusions. Some of these exclusions are introduced below.

Compensation benefits do not apply to injuries caused by the traveler's intentional acts or intentional violations of laws and regulations. This includes injuries resulting from attempted suicide. In addition, injuries sustained while engaging in hazardous sports or activities (such as mountain climbing using equipment including ice axes or hammers, luge, bobsleigh, skydiving, or hang gliding) are, in principle, not covered by compensation benefits. Another exclusion applies to injuries resulting from earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or tsunamis, which are not covered for domestic travel. This may be considered a distinctive feature of Japan, a country frequently affected by natural disasters.

<Damage to Personal Belongings>

If a traveler's personal belongings are damaged as a result of an "accidental incident" occurring while participating in a organized tour, indemnity for damage to personal belongings will be paid, up to a maximum of ¥150,000 per traveler per organized tour. (No payment will be made if the amount of damage resulting from a single incident does not exceed ¥3,000.) However, certain items, such as cash, credit cards, passports, dentures, contact lenses, plants, and animals, are excluded from coverage. This is because such items can be difficult to assess for loss or damage, are not generally considered standard personal belongings, or may carry a higher risk of fraudulent claims.

There are also certain exclusions that apply to indemnity for damage to personal belongings. As with bodily injury, damage caused intentionally by the traveler is not covered. Other exclusions include normal wear and tear and purely cosmetic damage that does not affect the functionality of the item. For domestic travel, damage caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or tsunamis is also excluded from coverage.

Travel agencies are required to pay compensation and other benefits in accordance with the Special Compensation Regulations, even when they are not at fault. As a result, many travel agencies appear to manage this risk by taking out insurance, such as special travel compensation insurance.



Courtesy calls and Visits to JATA

July 22nd (Wednesday)

On Wednesday, July 22, Ms. Batchimeg, Director General of the Mongolian Tourism Board, and others visited JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260722-mongolia/>

July 13th (Monday)

On Monday, July 13, the ANTOR Japan Council of Foreign Government Tourist Offices in Japan visited JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260713-antor/>

July 10th (Friday)

On Friday, July 10, Minister Plenipotentiary Algau of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia paid a courtesy visit to JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260710-ethiopia/>

July 8th (Wednesday)

On Wednesday, July 8, the European Travel Commission (ETC) paid a courtesy visit to JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260708-etc/>

July 3rd (Friday)

On Friday, July 3, Mr. Ahmad Mahruf, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Maldives, visited JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260702-maldives/>

July 2nd (Thursday)

On Thursday, July 2, Francisco Hasegawa, the new Ambassador of the Republic of Peru to Japan, and others visited JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260702-peru/>

June 16th (Tuesday)

On Tuesday, June 16, Taiwan Tourism Administration Director Chen Yu-hsiu paid a courtesy visit to JATA.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/20260616-taiwan/>

May 26th (Tuesday)

On Tuesday, May 26, Ms. Olga Kuriyama, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Greece, and others visited JATA.

https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/260526_greece/

May 21st (Thursday)

On Thursday, May 21, Lion Group Chairman Wang, Lion Travel Japan Co., Ltd. Representative Director Li, and five other representatives visited JATA.

https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/260521_lion/

May 18th (Monday)

On Monday, May 18, Maria Ozeł, Director of the Polish National Tourist Office, and others visited JATA.

https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/260518_poland/

* For courtesy visit records prior to this, please visit the JATA website.
<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-active/courtesy-visit/visit2025/>

JATA's Online Magazine "JATA-Komi"

JATA describes the daily activities of Headquarters and regional offices on this website.

https://www.jata-net.or.jp/about/jata-information/mog_jjatacomi/mog_jatacomi_index/?lang=en

*The linked articles on the JATA website can be translated into Japanese, English, Korean, traditional Chinese, and simplified Chinese. If the language is not translated properly, please click the Google Translate button (see below) and select your preferred language.

Please select your language (English, Chinese and Korean are available)
at the above "Google translation"  button.

For Companies Based Overseas

Join us as an Overseas Allied Member!

JATA welcomes you to join us as an Overseas Allied Member. You can get more details about the membership and application from the link below.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/english/whats/join-us/>

If you are looking for JATA membership for a business based in Japan, please check the link below.

<https://www.jata-net.or.jp/page-2298/>

August 2026

JATA International Newsletter August edition;

Written by JATA International Affairs Department

If you have any comments or inquiries regarding this newsletter, please use the following email address:

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