

### Exchange Group for Culture, Economy and Tourism of 1,100 People Visits Indonesia Events Include Evening of Exchange, Symposium, and Business Meeting



Chairman Nikai (far left) and President Joko (second from right)

The Japan-Indonesia Exchange Group for Culture, Economy and Tourism visited Indonesia late November, led by Toshihiro Nikai, head of the Japan-Indonesia Parliamentary Friendship League (also chairman of the Liberal Democratic Party's General Council, member of the House of Representatives, chairman of All Nippon Travel Agents Association).

The exchange group was made up of 1,100 people including 17 diet members along with Chairman Nikai, government officials, local government officials including three prefectural governors from Yamanashi, Ehime, and Kochi, travel industry officials, representatives of the economic and industrial world including Keidanren (Japan Business Federation), and travel and tourism industry personnel. As part of the visit to Indonesia, events held at the destination included the Evening of Exchange with the Exchange Group for Culture, Economy and Tourism, the Symposium on Expansion of Japan-Indonesia Tourism Exchange and the Business Meeting on Inbound Travel to Japan.

This visit to Indonesia by the exchange group aimed to further promote mutual exchanges between Japan and Indonesia in response to the Indonesian government's introduction of visa exemptions for Japanese people visiting Indonesia for tourism purposes starting in June this year.

At the Evening of Exchange held at the Hotel Mulia Senayan in Jakarta on November 23, there were approximately 1,300 participants including political and economic representatives of the two countries. Indonesian President Joko Widodo and Chairman Toshihiro Nikai entered the venue together and announced their strong commitment



Speakers at the Symposium on Expansion of Japan-Indonesia Tourism Exchange

to further promotion of mutual exchanges between Japan and Indonesia from their respective standpoints.

At the Symposium on Expansion of Japan-Indonesia Tourism Exchange held on November 23, Indonesia's Minister of Tourism Arif Yahya and Chairman Toshihiro Nikai gave speeches, and presentations were made by tourism officials of both countries, representatives of travel-related bodies, and heads of local government. Speakers held a lively debate, in light of the strengthened tourism strategies and easing of visas requirements in both Japan and Indonesia, on the theme of regional revitalization through expansion of bilateral tourism exchange and international exchanges between local areas.

JATA Chairman Hiromi Tagawa, who presented a speech at the symposium, praised Indonesia, a part of ASEAN that is garnering attention since economic integration scheduled for December, for its exemptions for tourist visas, infrastructure development such as airports and roads, and promotion of a pro-active tourism strategy. He mentioned that the number of Japanese travelers visiting Indonesia, which at 500,000 annually currently ranks fifth among international visitors, is "expected to reach one million annually in the future." To boost the effect of visa exemptions introduced in June 2015 for Japanese travelers visiting Indonesia for tourism purposes, he pointed out the need for measures to "expand destinations" and "diversify purposes."

Chairman Tagawa noted that half of Japanese travelers who go to Indonesia travel to resorts in Bali, and the other half goes mainly to Jakarta for business. Chairman Tagawa raised the need to break away from the current pattern where travel is concentrated in Bali and Jakarta because Indonesia is actually 5,000 kilometers long from east to west and is rich in variety and diversity of people and culture.

Given that there are diverse purposes for travel, including "food," "wellness," "festivals," "culture," and "sports" in Japan's outbound travel market and given that the market is mature like the markets in the US and Europe as 50 years have passed since the deregulation of overseas travel, Chairman Tagawa called on Indonesia to provide suggestions to Japan's travel industry for product development using "experience" as the keyword. He also mentioned the potential for sports exchanges, cultural exchanges, and youth exchanges that epitomize "experience" and "exchange." Particularly since the Asian Games will be held in Jakarta in 2018 and the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics will be held in 2020, he suggested promotion of various sports exchanges at the regional level in association with pre-training camps.

At the symposium, Yamanashi Prefecture Governor Hitoshi Goto, Ehime Prefecture Governor Tokihiro Nakamura, and Kochi Prefecture Governor Masanao Ozaki presented successful cases where exchanges of things and exchanges of people were held in combination.

In addition, to promote the creation of new tours to visit Japan, the business meeting on inbound travel to Japan was also held on November 23. Fifty-three groups including those representing Japan's local governments, travel agencies, lodging facilities, and tourist facilities met with Indonesian travel agencies to share information and transact business.

Participants from JATA in the exchange group this time included JATA officers, members of the JATA Outbound Travel Executive Committee, Inbound Travel Executive Committee, and Legal Affairs Committee. In addition to holding committee meetings at the destination, JATA officers and committee members also participated in an observation trip to Belitung, an island that is expected to become a new destination for the Japanese market in Indonesia.

## Memorandum of Understanding Signed with UZBEKTOURISM Aims at Expanding the Bilateral Tourism Exchange



Mr. Rizaev (left) and Mr. Tagawa at the signing ceremony

The chairman of JATA Mr. Hiromi Tagawa, signed a Memorandum of Understanding in Tashkent, on October 25th. Mr. Farrukh Rizaev, Chairman of National Company “UZBEKTOURISM” signed the memorandum on behalf of his company. The memorandum is aimed at expanding the mutual exchange between the two countries.

The signing ceremony was held at the Business Forum hosted by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) and Japan-Uzbekistan Economic Committee attended by 100 Japanese and 200 Uzbek representatives. The forum was attended by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe who was on an official visit to Uzbekistan at the time.

The fifteen representatives of Japanese businesses and universities who accompanied Mr. Abe during his visit, delivered presentations on development of infrastructure, natural resources, and industrial cooperation. Mr. Tagawa made a presentation on the topic “Development of Travel and Tourism.”

### Charter flights to Samarkand in April 2016

Mr. Tagawa revealed plans for charter flights to the Old City of Samarkand known as a world heritage site. Scheduled for April next year, the flights will be utilized in new tour products created under the theme “Experience.” The theme is indicative of the innovative approach to the matured Japanese overseas travel market, based on developing brand new tours. Chairman Tagawa called for the assistance of all related authorities and individuals in Uzbekistan.

## Outbound Japanese Travelers Down 0.8% in October, to 1,406,000

## Foreign Inbound Travelers Set New Record at 1,829,300, Up 43.8%

According to preliminary figures released by the Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO) on November 18, the number of outbound Japanese travelers in October 2015 was 1,406,000, down 0.8% year on year. Moreover, the number of outbound Japanese travelers from January through October 2015 was 13,519,900, down 4.5% year on year.

The number of outbound Japanese travelers was up 0.3% year on year in September, with 1,525,780, marking the first increase in 2015, but the figure turned negative once again in October. However, it appears that the downward pressure is weakening, given that the decline in the number of outbound Japanese travelers during June through August was in the 7% range for three consecutive months, at 7.6%, 7.4%, and 7.3%, respectively, and following the positive figure posted in September, declined a mere 0.8% in October.

The number of outbound Japanese travelers during November and December 2014 was 2,752,766, and if the figure is similar this year, the annual figure for outbound travelers will reach the lower 16 million range but is unlikely to surpass 16,903,388, which was the annual number of outbound travelers in 2014.

On the other hand, the number of foreign inbound travelers in October was 1,829,300, up 43.8% year on year, surpassing the previous October record of 1,272,000 in October 2014 by 557,000. The October 2015 figure is the second-highest single-month number ever, following the 1,918,000 posted in July 2014.

October, which marks the beginning of the autumnal color season in Japan, coincides with the holiday for National Day of the People’s Republic of China (October 1-7), and travel demand is high, in part due to the effects of promotions for inbound travel during this period. A combination of favorable factors, including demand for shopping due to the continuing weak yen and expanded consumption tax exemptions, expansion of flight routes, drops in fuel surcharges, increases in ports of call for cruise ships from China, and exemptions and relaxation of requirements for visas in recent years, have led to a significant increase in inbound foreign travelers.

2015 Visitor Arrivals & Japanese Overseas Travelers (Unit: Persons)

Month	Visitor Arrivals			Japanese Overseas Travelers		
	2014	2015	Change %	2014	2015	Change %
1 Jan.	944,009 (730,519)	1,218,393	29.1 (33.9)	1,253,404	1,235,612	-1.4
2 Feb.	880,020 (688,902)	1,386,982	57.6 (75.2)	1,404,873	1,257,154	-10.5
3 Mar.	1,050,559 (802,434)	1,525,879	45.2 (54.1)	1,596,751	1,534,026	-3.9
4 Apr.	1,231,471 (1,020,474)	1,764,691 (1,528,848)	43.3 (49.8)	1,189,132	1,144,833	-3.7
5 May.	1,097,211 (892,577)	1,641,734 (1,411,626)	49.6 (58.2)	1,280,765	1,262,103	-1.5
6 Jun.	1,055,273 (866,883)	1,602,198 (1,398,845)	51.8 (61.4)	1,289,029	1,190,805	-7.6
7 Jul.	1,270,048 (1,080,552)	1,918,356 (1,712,803)	51.0 (58.5)	1,414,912	1,309,956	-7.4
8 Aug.	1,109,569 (903,919)	1,817,023 (1,584,484)	63.8 (75.3)	1,783,127	1,653,622	-7.3
9 Sep.	1,099,102 (846,241)	*1,612,300	*46.7	1,520,863	*1,525,780	*-0.3
10 Oct.	1,271,705 (1,029,922)	*1,829,300	*43.8	1,417,766	*1,406,000	*-0.8
11 Nov.	1,168,427 (943,831)			1,355,246		
12 Dec.	1,236,073 (1,074,350)			1,397,520		
1~10 Jan.-Oct.	11,008,967 (8,862,423)	*16,316,900	*48.2	14,150,622	*13,519,900	*-4.5
1~12 Jan.-Dec.	13,413,467 (10,880,604)			16,903,388		

◆Note 1. The figures for Jan.-Nov.2014 are provisional, while \* stands for the preliminary figures estimated by JNTO.  
 ◆Note 2. Provisional and definitive figures for Visitor Arrivals are compiled by JNTO (source: Ministry of Justice), and provisional and definitive figures for Japanese Overseas Travelers are provided by the Ministry of Justice.  
 ◆Note 3. The figures in ( ) represent the number of tourists among the total.



### Discussion Deepened on Decentralizing Tourism to Local Areas for Wider-ranging Tourism and Preparations for Muslim Tourists Sessions on Inbound Travel to Japan and Halal Tourism

On September 25 and 26, at the JATA Tourism Expo Japan's International Tourism Forum, sessions were held on the themes of inbound travel to Japan and halal tourism.

#### —Inbound Travel to Japan Session—

##### Attracting Tourists to Local Areas with Tourist Appeal, Access, and Information Dissemination

The panel discussion on the theme of “decentralizing travel demand of foreign visitors to local areas and efforts toward formation for wide-area tourism” was held with Masaki Hirata (Executive Director Inbound Promotion Department, Japan National Tourism Organization [JNTO]) acting as moderator. The four panelists were Noriko Tada (Director, Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau), Yasuko Goto (Managing Director, Deputy Director General Railway Operations, Headquarters General Manager, Travel Operations Headquarters, Kyushu Railway Company), Kenji Takaoka (CEO, Export Japan Inc.), and Hisao Yoshimura (Executive Director, Marketing & Procurement Strategy, Global Marketing & Travel Inc.).

Masaki Hirata, executive director at JNTO, stressed that, while the number of inbound foreign visitors up to August this year has displayed miraculous growth, reaching 12.88 million, a 49% increase year on year, the industry is facing the urgent issue of a sudden increase and concentration of foreign travelers in certain regions. He emphasized the need to respond swiftly to this issue and to give priority to sustainable growth.

Noriko Tada, director of the Tanabe City Kumano Tourism Bureau, discussed the initiatives taken by the bureau, which was launched following the designation of the Sacred Sites and Pilgrimage Routes in the Kii Mountain Range as World Heritage sites in 2004 and the merger of the city of Tanabe with the surrounding area the following year. She noted that it has become a major pillar for promotion of inbound tourism, with its basic stance of tourism strategy revolving around the four points: “cherishing the roots rather than the boom,” “conservation and protection rather than exploitation,” “individuals rather than masses,” and “a quality tourist destination open to the world.” She revealed that 127 groups participated as inbound-oriented travel agencies and that sales reached around 150 million yen.

Yasuko Goto, managing director of Kyushu Railway Company, emphasized that the company is working to differentiate itself from other railway companies with a unique strategy called D&S train that focuses on design (D) and story (S). The company has boosted the inbound traveler share on the popular train Nanatsuboshi to 10% by using promotions such as offering charters of entire train cars and giving foreigners priority for a certain number of seats.

Kenji Takaoka, CEO of Export Japan who also is director of Japan Guide, emphasized the importance of information dissemination and ratings targeted at foreigners in web productions and promotions, and based on his experience during 15 years in the inbound travel business, he also pointed out the difficulty of fulfilling both the social role and business objectives.

Hisao Yoshimura, executive director at Global Marketing & Travel Inc., talked about his approach of focusing on attracting tourists to local areas rather than decentralizing tourism to local areas, and he wants to move beyond concentration on inbound travel's golden route. His view is that if each local area has tourist appeal, infrastructure for access, and a large amount of information dissemination, then that will lead to attraction of tourists to local areas.

#### —Halal Tourism Session—

##### Understanding and Responding to Halal, a Key Point for Muslim Tourists

Hind Hitomi Remon, chairperson of NPO Japan Halal Association (JHA), explained that the meaning of the word “halal” is “legal” in relation to Muslim life overall. She stressed that it relates not only to diet

but also to “methods for living a correct life” for Muslims. She called on people in Japan's corporate world, saying, “I want you to know that having an understanding of halal is fundamental for offering services to Muslims.”

According to Mohamed Fazal Bahardeen, CEO of Crescentrating Pte., Ltd., the Muslim market which was US\$20 billion in 2000 increased to US\$145 billion in 2014, and the outlook for it is to reach US\$200 billion in 2020. Fazal noted that the most important issue in product development and in building the capacity to respond to Muslim travelers in Japan's inbound travel market is halal food. He said that because Japanese food is popular among Muslim travelers, there is a need to focus on offering Japanese food that is halal.

Sirajuddin Suhaimee, senior principal assistant director of the Halal Hub Division Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM), explained that he has received many inquiries at JAKIM from Japanese-owned companies since last year, and among those companies, there is a strong trend to aim for halal certification in Malaysia rather than in Japan. He expressed the hope that Malaysia's certification standards would become the global benchmark

#### —Halal Tourism Session—

-Theme: Demands and Potentialities of Halal Tourism - Taking actions for welcoming Muslim travelers to Japan

-Keynote Speeches

-Keynote Speech 1: Summary of Islamic Culture and Halal in Japan

Hind Hitomi Remon, chairperson of NPO Japan Halal Association (JHA)

-Keynote Speech 2: Muslim Travel Market - Global trends and what next for Japan

Mohamed Fazal Bahardeen, founder & CEO of Crescentrating Pte., Ltd.

-Keynote Speech 3: Halal Certification and the Importance to Islamic Tourism - Malaysian Experience

Sirajuddin Suhaimee, senior principal assistant director of Halal Hub Division Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM)

-Panel Discussion-

-Moderator: Hiroshi Kurosu, chief researcher and executive officer, Japan Tourism Marketing Co.

-Panelists:

Hind Hitomi Remon

Mohamed Fazal Bahardeen

Sirajuddin Suhaimee

Amiruddin Supriady, sales manager, Ninomiya Co., Ltd.; vice chairman, Ninomiya Halal Committee

Terue Ishige, manager and adviser, JTB Muslim Inbound Marketing Project Team, Marketing & Sales Promotion, Global Account & Consulting LAPITA - Global Support for Japanese Companies Expanding Business Overseas

### “Tourism is Part of Sustainable Development” ASEAN-Japan Centre Will Collaborate with the Travel Industry



Mr. Masataka Fujita

At JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2015 held in September, the first Asian Tourism Leadership Forum was held, cosponsored by the ASEAN-Japan Centre.

In ASEAN member countries, the movement of people and things is accelerating due to economic integration, and ASEAN is expected to be a driving force of international tourism. The forum

was held at JATA Tourism Expo Japan this time with the cooperation of the ASEAN-Japan Centre with the aim of discussing shared issues and deepening mutual understanding through direct interaction between the private-sector leaders and government officials responsible for the future of tourism in Asia.

Masataka Fujita, secretary-general of the ASEAN-Japan Centre, noted, “For both Japan and ASEAN, the value of tourism is growing further.” He stressed, “It is important to consider how to integrate the tourism industry as a part of development while maintaining its growth momentum.” Keeping in view the paradigm shift in global development toward “sustainable development goals,” he said, “At the ASEAN-Japan Centre, we want to think about policies and strategies together with everyone in the tourism industry and to consider tourism as part of sustainable development.”