



SAKURA

No. 135

January – February 2021



し ものい い ものし
知る者言わず言う者知らず Those who know do not speak, those who speak do not know



明けましておめでとう御座います！

FROM THE TEACHER'S DESK

In today's globalization, knowing a foreign language will always give you an extra mile in the competition. Learning Japanese is quite different from learning other European languages whose base alphabets are like English. Teaching Japanese especially online during this pandemic is a big challenge both for students and teachers. There are numerous issues which require special attention to make online classes effective such as network, audio visual interaction, use of communication software, privacy, security etc. However, with cooperation and enthusiasm from students we have overcome all these hurdles and made the teaching enjoyable.

Before embarking on learning Japanese, you must set your goal first. You must be clear in your mind why do you like to choose Japanese? Your goal must have two parts – level of proficiency you aim to achieve and the time frame to reach that level. One special thing about Japanese is its pictograph or ideograph called Kanji. Practice is the only secret to memorize Kanji. There is no short cut in studying any new language. So, one must have good lesson plan with definite weekly hours to be spent on learning new things and revising the things which have already been learnt.

Finally knowing the traditions, history, heritage and culture of Japan is an essential part of learning Japanese.

*Papiya Dasgupta (Ghosh)
Rabindra Okakura Bhavan*

THE STUDENT SPEAKS

I'm studying Japanese because I like to study languages. I'd like to expand my work contacts outside English speaking countries. I work as a freelancer who owns a small company in India. Studying J Japanese gives me the opportunity to work as a technical interpreter in Japan.

I'd like to work in Japan as an interpreter for a few years. Also, I believe studying a language is good exercise for the mind. I'd like to continue studying at least one language for the rest of my life. Spanish and German are also on my bucket list. The way we see the world is the way we think in our language. Each language has a different way of interpreting the world. I'd like to understand that.

*Rajib Sinha
Rabindra Okakura Bhavan*

OUR EVENTS ONLINE

BIJOYA SAMMILANI

As per schedule, we managed to 'google-meet' **ONLINE** for the Annual Bijoya Sammilani. More members could participate than usual as it was accessible from far and wide! Thank you Arunava san, for the hilarious jog down memory lane!

24th IJSC



Nihongo Kaiwa Kyokai Society is planning to host the 24th India Japan Students Conference in the "virtual" mode **ONLINE**.

<https://www.facebook.com/747663985648834/posts/1139230523158843/?flite=scwspnss>

JAPANESE SINGING CONTEST

NKKS will hold the first **ONLINE** Singing Contest with the consulate of Japan in Kolkata on 30th Jan, 2021. For details please check the NKKS website.

JAPAN FILM FESTIVAL



Watch Japanese Film Festival **ONLINE** by Japan Foundation, Japan
<https://www.facebook.com/436642440210312/posts/849978778876674/?flite=scwspnss>

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AN INTERVIEW WITH CONSUL GENERAL Mr NAKAMURA YUTAKA



Mr. Nakamura Yutaka was appointed as Consul General of Japan in Kolkata in March, 2020. But due to the COVID-19 pandemic he has taken charge on July 1st, after the departure of his predecessor Taga Masayuki to Chennai. In his

checked career he has acquired a vast experience in various countries. He spoke to us on various topics ranging from his academic background to his hope of working positively towards strengthening of the India-Japan bilateral relations.

Excerpts from the conversation:

Q:: Your birthplace?

A:: I was born in Kyoto.

Q:: What was your major in the University ?

A:: My subjects were Political Science and Law. In March, 1985 I graduated from the Faculty of Law, Ryukyu University, Japan.

Q:: Have you been to India before?

A:: This is my first assignment in India, but during 1995-97 I have visited India several times on official work.

Q:: You have a vast working experience in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA)?

A::Yes, in April,1985 I joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (MOFA). Before coming here I was the Deputy Consul General in Atlanta, USA. I have also worked in San Francisco (Consul, Consulate General of Japan), Australia (Attache, Embassy of Japan, and First Secretary, Embassy of Japan), Fiji (Third Secretary, Embassy of Japan), Ghana (Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan), Uganda (Minister-Counsellor, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Japan) and Bangladesh (First Secretary, Embassy of Japan).

Q::Your experience in Kolkata.

A:: On account of the pandemic the normal activities have some limitations now. So I am yet to visit the city suitably. But I am eagerly waiting to overcome this situation and normalcy to return soon. For a long time I have heard about the hospitality and warmth of the people in Kolkata. I have read about its rich heritage.

Q:: What is your impression of India and Kolkata?

A:: Kolkata has a legacy of being the cultural center of India and it is also the gateway to intellectual and cultural exchanges between India and Japan. We know that Buddhism had originated in India. I know about Rabindranath Tagore, who has contributed a lot to the India-Japan friendship and cooperation through his 5 visits to Japan. I am also aware of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's compassion towards Japan. There is also the history of Justice Radha Binod Pal's in-depth understanding of Japan during the Tokyo Trials and strengthening of its bond with India after the Second World War. All these eminent personalities were from Kolkata.

Q:: How do you see the Indo-Japan diplomatic relations in this pandemic scenario?

A:: There has been a systematic effort to strengthen the bilateral relations between India and Japan such as Cooperation related to the COVID-19 preventive measures, further boosting of the investments from Japan to India for contributing to the global supply chain, and grant aid to India under the 'Economic and Social Development Programme' of the Official Development Assistance Scheme our government.

Q:: Future plans in this regard?

A:: I hope to contribute in strengthening the political, economic and cultural relations between India and Japan maintaining their already existing positive relationship as 'Special Strategic and Global Partner'. I shall also try to expand Japanese Investments in Eastern India, focusing on West Bengal.

Q:: Any fond memory of your University?

A:: As a University student I used to go to a swimming club. I loved swimming very much.

Q:: Your parents and family..

A:: My father was a Medical Practitioner and my mother was a nurse. I have three children - one daughter and two sons.

Q:: Your hobby?

A:: My hobby is swimming and now also playing golf .

Q:: Any suggestions to the students of Japanese Language?

A:: Actually to know the language well it is required to be conversant with the Japanese culture and technology. This widens the scope for jobs in many companies for students.

Aloke Basu



LOCKDOWN Diaries-4



BABLI CHOUDHURY SAID:

It's been months since the outbreak of Covid 19 which has wrecked the world and has forced people to stay at home unless one has to venture out due to urgent work. I am a homemaker, and have stayed at home looking after my family and taking care of them, yet I am also trying to cope with this new norm. I am quite busy throughout the day as our helping hands cannot come inside the house, but I needed to keep myself physically and mentally fit.

The lockdown period has been truly harsh on us forcing us to curtail our social lifestyle. I was getting a bit bored after a few days of home confinement. But I did not let any negativity overpower me. I knew that I would not be able to go shopping or go to the movie theatre but I could watch movies on the net. So I spent the afternoons watching movies or anime, and now quite hooked onto Pokemon.

Gardening interests me quite a lot. How I wish that I could have a small kitchen garden in my little open space. I started to sow some onion bulbs and some seeds that I gathered from lemons and chillis from the kitchen. It has been almost four months now and I can see little saplings growing from the seeds which bring me immense joy in this distressed time. My joy knew no bounds when I could use some green onion leaves from my little garden to garnish a chicken meatball soup that I prepared a few days

ago.



I also like to spend time cooking and baking. Since eating out is no more advisable nowadays, I find enough time to make kaju barfis, besan laddoos, gulabjamuns and rasmalais at home for the sweet cravings. Frosting cakes and cookies, puddings and pies and pavlovas, takes up most of my time. What with a gourmand family!

I still find time to connect to elderly relatives and friends over the phone, to talk to them and enquire about their health and wellbeing. Of course my husband also extends his hand whenever necessary. I always try to stay positive and spread positivity in my own little way amongst the people I know and care.

ANUPAM DAS SAID:

Nobody had ever thought about a situation where wearing mask would be new normal, nor did I! This pandemic came to teach us a lesson - whatever be the situation, keep fighting. I personally was relaxed and enjoying those initial lockdown days. Never thought this would give me a blow. Being an entrepreneur I could see my business moving downwards. Employees stopped coming to the office. Clients stopped communication as they were also impacted. Then I realized that I have to think differently. I re-energized myself, remembering those days of my struggle when I had started my own business. Restructuring my current office planning, I got the situation under control. Also I started another new venture which I'm planning to establish as a new company in future. I am already getting good responses. This lockdown now seems to me as a blessing. It helped me to be stronger day by day.



Besides the discussion of money, I found about earning myself more utilized. These days I have explored my hobbies. I use to love painting a lot but had almost forgotten that I could paint. Within these few months, I have completed a couple of sketches. I learned playing

new musical instruments like ukulele, kokoriko - tried my hand playing the guitar. Singing along with my wife all the time, playing tabla with my little one- these small things give me immense pleasure which I usually miss due to my normally busy schedule.

In a nutshell I would say that this pandemic gave us opportunities to explore ourselves- be it in your on- going job, lifestyle, hobbies, living standards everything! Explore, fight, win, stay safe! We'll win this situation like we did so many times before."

DID YOU KNOW?

Hatsuyume (初夢) is the first dream one has in the New Year. Traditionally, the contents of such a dream would foretell the luck of the dreamer in the ensuing year.



JAPANESE CROSSWORD
(January- February)

1	2	3	4		5
6					
7				8	
9			10		
		11			
12					

ACROSS

- 1) Brilliant/glorious
- 6) Personality
- 7) Nobleman
- 8) Spoon
- 9) Pine
- 10) To run
- 11) Demanding for non-existent loan
- 12) Labour festival

DOWN

- 1) Sword fish
- 2) New Year's Day
- 3) Kettle
- 4) To draw
- 5) Striking/remarkable
- 8) Umbrella
- 10) To pay
- 11) Corner

Mahashveta Basu Mukherjee

Answers to
JAPANESE CROSSWORD
(November- December)

1 ぼ	2 う	3 ね	ん	4 か	5 い
6 う	つ	る		7 た	き
8 は	り		9 き	ぼ	う
10 つ	か	11 み		12 う	め
	13 わ	き	14 ま	え	
15 き	り		16 ゆ	き	み

WORD JUMBLE – 69

Unscramble the following words, and join the circled letters to find out the answer:



What's the proverb?

1. ずねみ (Mouse)

○ □ □ □

2. かれるこあ (To admire)

□ ○ □ □ □ □

3. もとをとして (Based on)

○ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

4. しきかぶ (Stock)

○ ○ □ □ □ □

5. ばんるすでんわ (Answering machine)

○ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

Sontu Debnath

ANSWERS TO
WORD JUMBLE – 68

- 1. ねびき
- 2. こうさてん
- 3. あじさえ
- 4. あたりまえ

ね □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

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