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DECEMBER, 2024]**

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E-MAIL MAGAZINE

Issue 196 [December, 2024]

OCCI e-Magazine

<Back number available at <http://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/e/emagazine/>>

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1-1. FIRST KANSAI DELEGATION TO CHINA IN 12 YEARS MEETS GOV'T OFFICIALS, TALKS BUSINESS

A Kansai business delegation, organized by seven Kansai economic organizations including the OCCI, visited Beijing from November 24 to 28, 2024. The 85-strong delegation was led jointly by OCCI Chairperson Shingo Torii and Kansai Economic Federation Chairman Masayoshi Matsumoto.

This was the eighth delegation from Kansai to China since the inaugural

visit in 1971 in the run-up to the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, and the first since 2012. The mission was profoundly fruitful, allowing participants to get a feel for the on-the-ground situation in one of Kansai's foremost business destinations at a time when both nations find themselves in a changeable environment, and to exchange views on how to promote bilateral business exchanges. The

delegation met with Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng, and held discussions with Li Fei, Assistant Minister of MOFCOM of China discussing measures to further promote economic exchanges, and calling for increased safety and transparency in China's FDI environment.

In addition, with just a few months left until the 2025 World Expo in Osaka, events were held to promote the expo and Japan as a fine destination for Chinese travelers. On November 26, 2024, the delegation visited the China International Supply Chain Expo, where they saw booths from various companies worldwide and gauged China's international trade show capabilities.

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1-2. OCCI DELEGATION TO SHANDONG: GOV'T OFFICIALS, BUSINESS MATCHING, SEZ TOURS, AND MORE

An OCCI delegation visited Heze and Yantai cities in China's Shandong Province, a region of particularly lively interaction with Japan from November 25 to 30, 2024. The delegation's objective was getting a real, on-the-ground feel for business in China at a time when the flood of so-called "information" can be confusing and conflicting. The 22-strong party included Kazuhiro Higashi, vice-chair of the OCCI; Masahiro Imai, chairperson of the OCCI China Business Committee; and a variety of participants from enterprises interested in Japan-China business.

In addition to visiting local companies, the delegation met with Heze and Yantai city government officials for lively discussion on economic and cultural exchanges between those cities and Osaka. There were also business

matching and exchange events, in which participants were able to register their matching requests in advance, as well as tours of a special economic zone in Heze and the Huangbo New Area in Yantai to observe the business environment in Shandong.

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2. JAPAN & KOREA CHAMBER HEADS MEET IN OSAKA AHEAD OF MILESTONE YEAR IN 2025

The 13th Japan-Korea Summit of Chambers of Commerce and Industry was held in Osaka on November 25, 2024. This follows last year’s summit, which was the first in six years, and comes amid a thawing of relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea. OCCI Chairperson Shingo Torii attended the summit in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

After opening remarks by representatives from Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) Chairman Ken Kobayashi and Korea Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) Chairman Chey Tae Won, attendees got down to business with presentations from both sides. Mr. Torii spoke on the theme of Japan-Korea economic cooperation, expressing his hopes that the two countries could come together on trade, third-country cooperation, tourism, and innovation. He also noted that 2025 was a milestone year -- not only the 60th anniversary of normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and the ROK, but also the year of the World Expo in Osaka, and the APEC CEO Summit in Korea -- and voiced expectation for an upswing in business and cultural interaction between the two nations.

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3. O-BIC KANSAI INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS VISIT THE LOCAL SME GENERATING BUZZ FOR THE 2025 WORLD EXPO

The Osaka Business and Investment Center (O-BIC) held the fourth instalment of its Kansai International Exchange Program on November 21, 2024. Titled “O-BIC Presents: Discovering Osaka’s Unique and Innovative SMEs,” the event was aimed at consulates in the Kansai region, and attracted an audience of 10 consular staffs from 7 countries. Participants toured the premises of Osaka’s hot new footwear maker Re: GetA where they took in new construction, witnessed the development of the “floating shoes” whose scheduled appearance at next year’s World Expo has the community abuzz, and discussed topics such as Osaka’s vibrant SMEs and international business.

During the discussion and Q&A session, participants commented that they could sense the great potential of Osaka’s SMEs, and expressed hope for collaborative initiatives and projects aimed at sparking innovation with companies from other countries who plan to visit Osaka in the run-up to World Expo 2025.

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<https://o-bic.net/e/about/>

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4. OCCI & JETRO INK COMPREHENSIVE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT AIMED AT

PROMOTING ECONOMIC GROWTH THROUGH CROSS-BORDER BUSINESS

OCCI Chairperson Shingo Torii and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) Chairman Norihiko Ishiguro formally launched a Comprehensive Partnership Agreement at a ceremony on November 29th, 2024. The agreement is aimed at harnessing next year’s World Expo to boost cooperation between the two organizations in order to promote FDI in Osaka and the Kansai region further revitalize the local economy. With world’s eyes on Osaka as expo host, the OCCI undertakes to apply its long years of experience in supporting Japanese enterprises, and JETRO will leverage its extensive overseas network - together they will build a framework of support for enterprises seeking to do business overseas. Through seamless corporate support covering the whole path between Japan and the world, OCCI and JETRO are endeavoring to promote growth in Osaka (and nationwide) and further revitalize the Osaka economy by encouraging FDI in Osaka by international companies.

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5. 2025 WORLD EXPO UPDATES

5-1. OSAKA MIDOSUJI RUNWAY 2024

Midosuji Runway 2024 transformed Osaka’s Midosuji avenue into a stage on November 3, 2024, as the city’s main thoroughfare hosted a variety of performances aimed at spreading the word about Osaka’s charms nationwide and around the world. With the 2025 World Expo just around the corner, the theme of this year’s

Midosuji Runway was “Open Up!” Top performers from various fields gathered for an extravaganza with local and global audiences, the World Expo, and the future in mind. Osaka City Mayor Hideyuki Yokoyama and Osaka Prefectural Governor Hirofumi Yoshimura made appearances, while some 560 dancers whipped the neighborhood into excitement.

Find out more at the official Midosuji Runway 2024 website (Japanese only) at

<https://midosuji-runway.jp/>

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5-2. COME AND SEE OSAKA AT ITS BEST: THE FESTIVAL OF THE LIGHTS 2024

The OCCI is once again proud to be a part of the organizing committee of the Osaka Festival of the Lights, which will transform the city into a dreamscape from November 3, 2024, to January 31, 2025. Come and enjoy world-record Midosuji Illumination and other related events throughout Osaka Prefecture.

Find out more at the official Osaka Festival of the Lights website at

<https://www.hikari-kyoen.com/en/>

“KUUZO~Expo? More like Eatspo!”

In the run-up to the 2025 World Expo, the OCCI is showcasing Osaka many, many, oh-so-many dining options on Instagram.

Whet your appetite at the OCCI Instagram account, and give us a follow while you're there! https://www.instagram.com/osaka_cci/

Tickets for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai

Firstly, you need to register yourself to Expo2025 website and get your Expo ID. You can buy the ticket, reserve your entry date, and enjoy various services with EXPO ID Admission tickets will be e-tickets. You can purchase them with a smartphone or PC. In addition to the ticket, you need to reserve the entry date in advance.

The detailed information on entry reservation will be announced later.

[Click here to purchase admission tickets]

<https://www.expo2025.or.jp/en/tickets-index/>

[Check out the OCCI's 2025 World Expo website at]

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/expo2025/pavilion>

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6.<COURTESY VISIT (1ST NOVEMBER-30TH NOVEMBER)>

(Mayor of Bucheon, South Korea) 11th November

-Mr. Cho Yong-ik

(President of Friuli-Venezia Giulia Autonomous Region, Italy) 27 th November

-Mr. Hon. Massimiliano Fedriga

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And finally, some Osaka trivia. You know the Yamato River, right? The river that runs from the mountains of Nara westward through eastern Osaka Prefecture to Osaka Bay? Well, did you know that, around 300 years ago, the powers-that-be decided that the river was causing flood damage too often, so they just MOVED THE RIVER?! That's right, rather than relocating populated areas away from the danger zones, they moved an entire river, and today's Yamato River follows a different path. It's a saga in itself, and a fascinating part of Osaka's history that rewards investigation.

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[O-BIC as one-stop service center for creating a foothold in Osaka]

<http://o-bic.net/>

[Information about scheduled events (in Japanese only)]

<https://www.osaka.cci.or.jp/event/index.php>

[linkedin]

<https://www.linkedin.com/in/osaka-o-bic-2025/recent-activity/all/>



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