

KIRI-TIMES

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From Okinawa to Bangladesh

Dr. Houei Hayashi (50) was born in Okayama but has been living in Okinawa for several years. He became a doctor at the age of 24. He was involved in setting up the Okinawa Prefectural Nanbu Medical Children's Center .

In 2017, he volunteered at a refugee camp in Hakimpura, Bangladesh helping Rohingya people who had fled violence in Myanmar. In his free time,

Dr Hayashi is an accomplished violinist and performs with Okinawa Symphony Orchestra

"When I was a student in university, I was a backpacker and I went to many countries, including India, Turkey, Kenya, Peru, and Bolivia. So, when I became a doctor, I had a goal - to someday help those in developing countries by taking part in an international

medical support program. But at first I couldn't because I got married and had young children and I was too busy. Then in 2014, with my children almost grown up, I gave up my full time job and I remembered the promise that I had made. So it took a while to organize but just about one year ago I went to a Rohingya refugee camp in Bangladesh, just over the border from Myanmar, as a member of the Japanese NGO, HuMA (Humanitarian Medical Assistance).

I went to the Hakimpara camp. It was a medium sized camp with about 33,000 people - the biggest camp in the area had over half a million people. I went from December 23rd 2017 to January 3rd 2018. I spent Christmas Day in the camp. Even though Bangladesh is an Islamic country, Christmas Day was still a holiday. I was surprised.

Let me explain about the Rohingya. They had been living in Myanmar for many years but faced persistent discrimination there. They were not even allowed to have Myanmar nationality. Then in 2017 they were attacked by the Myanmar army - their houses were burnt and many were killed. Hundreds of thousands fled.

I worked in a temporary clinic, supporting a local Bangladeshi NGO. The refugees had a variety of symptoms: fever, pain, difficulty sleeping, breathing, fatigue and diarrhea etc. I wasn't treating people who had been injured in the fighting - at least six or seven thousand Rohingya were killed - I was dealing those who had managed to escape the conflict. Many of them were basically healthy but they had left their homes with nothing. At the time when I was there, there was a diphtheria outbreak. This is a serious



Dr Hayashi talks about his experiences in Bangladesh on a recent visit to OCI

disease but in Japan, it is very rare as young children receive a vaccine to protect against it.

There were many humanitarian support agencies working together in Bangladesh - WHO, ULHCR, OIM, UNICEF, other United Nations agencies, MSF, Save the children, and the International Red Cross. I was very impressed by the co-operation. They broke the relief plan into 11 sections; education, food security, health (our section), logistics, nutrition, protection, shelter, site management, water sanitation, hygiene, communication and multi sector.

In the past year the refugee camp has become more permanent. Water systems have been dug, many houses have been

built. The Rohingya people have been registered, given food, clothes and other things. It's a miracle and spectacular to see. So I think I saw the best refugee camp it is possible to see because this area is not so dangerous, like refugee camps are in parts of Africa. And humanitarian groups have no trouble reaching or entering the Bangladeshi camps, which isn't always the case. I think these refugees will not go back

to Myanmar because for the first time they have been given some dignity. If they go back to Myanmar, they will feel in danger. So it is very difficult to solve this problem. Another problem is that some Bangladesh people don't want them to stay. "

Dr Hayashi will deliver a lecture about his experiences with the Rohingya people on April 25th, in the college chapel.



Governor Deni Addresses OCI

Okinawa's Governor is urging everyone to vote in the forthcoming referendum on the construction of new US military facilities at Henoko. Governor Deni made the comments during a visit to Okinawa Christian Institute on January 31. He said it is important that everyone eligible to take part in the referendum - and that now includes 18 year olds - should do so. While on Campus, governor Deni, the 8th governor of the prefecture, delivered a lecture, as well as meeting with OCU student group, Minnagoto. The previous day they visited him in his office

Minnagoto is a group of students who have been cooperating with local newspaper,

The Ryukyu Shinpou. There are eight members in the group and they created this new word, "Minnagoto" to describe their group. It means everyone's business, because they say it is important for everyone to think about Okinawa's problems. They formed the group after watching the movie, "The Miracle of Costa Rica." This is a documentary about how Costa Rica stopped spending money on the military and diverted it instead to health and education projects. They chose another way to maximize the happiness of the nation. After watching that, Minnagoto had many meetings and discussed such problems in Okinawa as gender equality, part time job abuse, over



development of tourism, and political apathy among the young. As well as meeting with Governor Deni they have also been to see the losing candidate in the governorship race, Mr. Sakima. Minnagoto's members have been working hard to produce some proposal documents.

Tour conductor's life isn't easy



An angry Japanese passenger asked me, "Why are we going to arrive at the last destination so late?" This happened last summer when I was working as a tour conductor. The answer was that one or two people had come back late to the bus after every stop, even though I always told all the passengers to come back 10 minutes before the departure time. So, it wasn't my fault that by the end of the day we were so far behind schedule but I just had to apologize to him. If something bad happened, I had to apologize to passengers even when it wasn't my fault. Another day, a Japanese woman said to me, "Why do you never talk about Okinawa? If you can't do that, your explanations mean nothing." I couldn't say anything because if I told the truth, it

might have made her even angrier and I didn't want to have more trouble.

Do you know why I couldn't talk about Okinawa? It is because I was a tour conductor, not a bus guide. Let me explain the difference. The tour conductor represents the travel agent. Their duties are many. For example, they have to make sure the transportation is working normally and is on time. They also need to check out how safe their destination is, and ensure there are toilet facilities there. Then, they need to tell the passenger all of this information. If passengers are sick or have an accident, the tour conductors take care of them. They try to prevent accidents happening in the first place and try to control passenger if they behave in a dangerous or reckless manner. Bus guides on the other hand, represent the bus company and they are the people who give passengers information about local places and make them feel happy. So, these jobs are totally different.

In my job as a tour conductor, I had to bring the passengers to four places. Passengers from abroad accounted for 90% of our business. I had to make the announcements in English and of course in Japanese. Things like, "We'll soon arrive at the service area, I recommend you go to the washroom here because we won't stop again for half an hour." At first, I felt it was a really easy job. But that was before I received those complaints.

The reason I wanted to be a tour conductor in the first place was because I

wanted to travel for free and I wanted to have a new experience. In order to become a tour conductor you have to get a licence as an "Itinerary control manager". For that, you take the course over two days in a row, then you'll have an exam. If you pass the exam, you have to work with a colleague who has already got the qualification. There are 2 types of license: one is for working in Japan and, when you have over a year's experience, you can take the exam for the other license which allows you to work as a tour conductor abroad.

I only have the domestic license because I still don't have enough experience.

It's a hard job, even without the occasionally grumpy customers, but I have also met some lovely passengers. One particularly memorable one came from Thailand and there were seven people in her family. Our bus only had 44 seats and that time it was full, so I didn't have any place to put my bag and water. One of the Thai women from this huge family suggested I leave my stuff with her. She held on to it throughout the day and at the end of the tour she gave me 5000 yen as a tip. She said, "I know you are very busy and work hard, but you are always smiling and nice to everyone." Another day, there was a group with only four people. At the start, they didn't talk to me a lot but by the end of the tour they asked me to take a photo with them as they wanted a souvenir of their time in Okinawa. That made me feel really happy about my job.

What's your post graduation plan ?

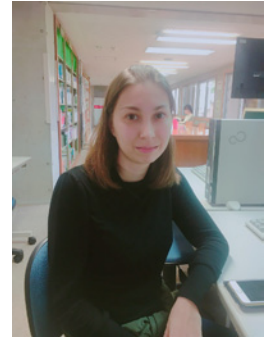
Hitoshi

I'm still looking for a job. I hope to get a job related to IT. I want to use computers in my job and if possible, I would love to edit Virtual Reality movies. With regards my personal life, I want to go to the U.S. because my relatives live there and I want to enjoy talking with them in English.



Maria

I belonged to OCJC but I thought if I transferred to the 4 year university I would have a better chance of getting a good job. After graduating from OCU I will go to Tokyo to try to get work. I am an artistic person so I want to find a job where I can be creative.



Hikaru

I will transfer to Ryukyu University's department of Tourism Science. I haven't decided my dream yet but I'd like to go study abroad in the USA or Australia. I want to use English in my future job.



Ai

I have a goal to go to study abroad in Canada. But I need to save money so hopefully I'll go to Canada in about 2 years. Also I want to work at a company that has something to do with beauty treatments and I want to use the English that I learned in this school.



Chigusa

I want to be a bus driver after graduating from this school. But firstly I need to get the proper license so I will save money while continuing my current part time job. Actually, I already have an MT driving license so I think I'm ready to get the bus driver's license quickly.



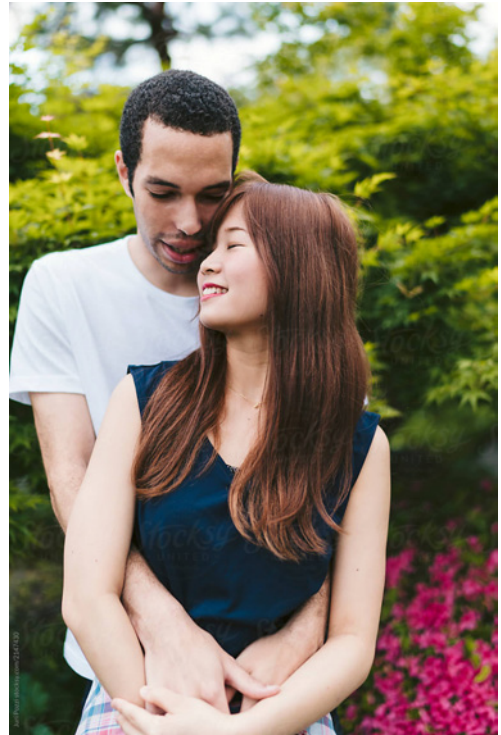
Dating Across Cultural Borders

America×Japan

I have been in a relationship with an American for three years. I didn't study English but when I started going out with my boyfriend I could learn English naturally. Last year we got married. At that time we had to complete lots of paperwork in both English and Japanese - that was hard for the two of us. I can't speak English fluently so sometimes we had arguments because of the difficulty of speaking different languages. There were lots of misunderstandings. But we can enjoy each other's culture and now I can understand English much better compared with the past .

Korea×Japan

I have been together with my Korean boyfriend for 1 year. Our relationship is really good but sometimes I don't understand him. I can't speak Korean and he can't speak Japanese so we communicate through English. I'm not good at English so sometimes I feel that if we could speak the same language it would be easier to have conversations. Sometimes I'd like to talk to him more deeply about what's on my mind. Another problem is that we can't meet very easily, so if I want to meet him I have to go Korea or he has to come Japan and that all costs money. But we can enjoy each other's culture, food and language. Before I started the relationship with him I didn't understand Korean culture exactly but



now I have come to understand it a little. So it is a new experience and I am learning new information so even though cross culture relationships are sometimes really difficult, we are enjoying ours.

America×Japan

I have been together with my American boyfriend for less than a year and a half. What I feel is difficult about cross culture relationships is the cultural differences. In Japan when I visit my family we have to bring some gift and bow to each other but in America they don't. When they greet each other, they don't need to bow. They just shake hand or maybe kiss, so when I explained to him about Japanese culture it was a little difficult for him to take in. But it is also a good thing that we have a different culture and different language so we don't know a lot about each other's lifestyle. It has become very natural for us to explain about our differences on a daily basis so that's no trouble at all. In fact, I think that's one of the positive sides of our relationship.

Unsung Heroes: The Pink Ladies



In our university, there is a group of women who clean our classrooms, corridors and restrooms. They are called "The Pink Ladies" by the students, since they wear pink uniforms. But have you ever thought about how they clean our classrooms and what kind of people they are? As you know, their job is mostly cleaning. There are seven ladies in total and they work from Monday to Saturday. They divide the working day into two shifts - the part from 7:30 to 11:30 is called "The A shift", and from 12:30 to 4:30 is "The B shift". They work just one shift a day. For example, three people work on the A shift, then the other four people work on the B shift. Did you know that they don't only do cleaning, but they have many additional responsibilities. For example, they set up things when our college has an event, like Christmas Eve Worship. Also, every Friday afternoon they collect things that

students have forgotten in the classrooms during the previous week. So, if you have lost something, please look for it in Shalom by the vending machines. Girls are more than half of the total number of students in our college so the cleaning ladies work especially hard to keep the female restrooms clean. However, there are some girls who don't dispose of things properly. So we can help the pink ladies by being more thoughtful and by following the rules. Furthermore, in our school you were not allowed to smoke anywhere inside the buildings. Up until recently, there were designated smoking spots but some students didn't follow the rules and so the pink ladies had to pick up cigarette butts everywhere. Now the rules have changed and you can't smoke anywhere on campus so if you are a smoker please observe the ban. And don't forget when you meet the Pink Ladies, give them a smile and maybe even say, "thank you" for all their hard work.

OCI gets better connected

OCI will soon be easier than ever to reach, thanks to a new monorail station due to open over the coming months. The station at Sakata will be just 1.5 km, or a 20 minute walk, from our campus. But if Nishihara council gets its wish, a new monorail station could be built even closer, just in front of Nishihara High School - a ten minute stroll from OCI. The council is campaigning to have Yuirail extended by 5.5 km from Sakata to the site of the proposed new MICE venue. This huge new facility is being designed to host corporate meetings, international conferences, and events including rock concerts. With a capacity of 20,000, Nishihara's town planners are anxious to minimise traffic congestion and are pushing hard for improved transport links to the area, including the four station extension to the monorail. According to Yuichi Shimabukuro from Nishihara Council, the monorail extension is badly needed, "There will be 20,000 people gathered in MICE, so traffic congestion is expected. Some of them will also come from the mainland. The monorail will always run on time, but buses in Okinawa are often late, so the monorail is the best solution." The council also envisage a new four lane road linking MICE with the Sakata highway overpass, currently nearing completion. That is not the only new thoroughfare in the pipeline - this same scheme will see a road branch off from Sakata towards Minami Uebaru,



Yuichi Shimabukuro from Nishihara Town Council explaining how a proposed extension to the monorail could serve the MICE facility

passing right in front of OCI. Sections of this route have already been completed but it is expected to be several years before it is open to traffic. With regards the latest plans to extend the monorail, a decision is expected in the Spring. If the project does get the go ahead, construction is expected to take around eight years.

Tips For Working at The Officers' Club

A few years ago, I got a job at a formal restaurant on base in Okinawa but I quit after 8 months. It was because of an ugly drama among some of the people who worked there. But before going into the details, let me first tell you a bit about the job. If you work on base, you are serving Americans who are in the military or their family members. Okinawans who work on base have different levels of job security. Many are part time workers who get paid by the hour and have no

access to other benefits. However, some are what is called *gunkoyoin*. This means that their jobs are more secure and they're better paid. These different status levels can lead to bad feelings among the Okinawan staff. At the restaurant where I worked, things were even more complicated because of the rivalry between the waitresses and the cashiers. Basically, it all came down to tips. If you are a waitress, you share your tips with all of the other waitresses, 20 people or more. However if you are a cashier, you only share the tips with a few people – the manager and two or three other cashiers.

A few months after I started working there, I began to hear bad rumors about some of my colleagues. It seemed everyone was talking behind everyone else's back. It started out of



nowhere and made the entire restaurant's staff feel uncomfortable. This is what it came down to: some waitresses were jealous of how much tips the cashiers were getting, as it was a lot more than they received even though they worked longer hours. So that made them jealous and upset. As I was a cashier, I was in the firing line but I only worked once or twice a week and tried my best to stay out of the trouble. That was becoming more difficult as the situation got worse, and eventually it spiraled out of control. Some waitresses said the cashiers instructed customers to hand any tips directly to them, instead of leaving them on the tables. Other waitresses simply accused the cashiers of stealing the tips. The managers and high ranking officers were forced to intervene in an effort to calm the situation. After that the atmosphere did get better, but not enough to tempt me to stay. I'd had enough of the backbiting. Sure, I had had a great opportunity to use English –

working on base is a great way to improve your English, or for that matter a great way to find an American boyfriend, if that's what you're after – but in the end I felt it just wasn't right for me and I handed in my notice.

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