

# SynthesAizu

June 2024  
Volume 4 Issue 6

## Association News



## 'Little Trip' Series

## Bangladesh



Our Little Trip Series is back with Bangladesh! Bangladesh is a country located in South Asia, next to India, Myanmar, Bhutan and Nepal. Join us for a morning learning about festivals, food, clothes, traditions and more from Osama OMAR. You'll get a good look into the beauty of Bangladesh and it's rich cultural traditions. Osama himself has a super interesting background, so it is guaranteed to be a great time. (Learn more about Osama in our Member Spotlight on page 3!)

**Date:** June 29th 10:00~11:30  
**Place:** Aizu Keikodo 3F Rm 1  
**Presentation by:** Osama OMAR  
**Cost:** FREE  
**Limit:** 30 people  
**Sign-up:** By June 28th (Fri)



## FIND English Convo. Club

Why not come and speak English with people from all walks of life and maybe make some new friends? Everyone is welcome, no matter your English level.

<b>When</b>	Saturday, <u>June 15th</u> 10:00~11:30
<b>Place</b>	City Learning Centre (Keikodo) 3F Rm 1
<b>Sign Up</b>	Contact <a href="mailto:mail@awia.jp">mail@awia.jp</a> by <u>Friday, June 14th</u>



\*Due to the nature of FIND and AtsuHana, we ask that participants wear a mask. Thank you for your understanding.\*

## AtsuHana Japanese Convo. Club.

Speak Japanese in a casual way with many people and have fun with Japanese culture. We'll be doing something special in July! See July's Newsletter for more!

**Date:** July 13th (Sat) 10:00-11:30  
**SIGN UP REQUIRED SIGN UP STARTS JULY 2ND.**

## Special Speaker!

We'll have our General Members Meeting on June 8th, and after, we've got a Special Speaker! **OIKAWA Koji** will give a presentation that will give a new perspective on speaking with people from other cultures; something that will be more and more important for Japan in the coming years.

He was selected as one of News Week Japan's Top 100 Japanese People the World Respects in 2019, and received the Agency for Cultural Affairs Commissioner's Award in 2021. Using his background in comedy, OIKAWA-sensei became a hugely successful Japanese Teacher in China. He inspired many students to become highly successful at speaking Japanese with many of them winning speech contests. Come hear an interesting perspective from an interesting man!!



**OIKAWA Koji**

**Place:** Aizu Culture Centre (Jotomachi 14-52)

**Special Speaker:** 15:30-17:15

(Title: From the Trenches of a Japanese Classroom: How to Communicate with COMPASSION)

Speaker: OIKAWA Koji

(non-members welcome! Sign-up deadline: June 7th)

\*\*No Interpretation for Special Speaker\*\*

June 8th

**2024 International Festival** will be on Oct 5th (Sat) at the Tsuruga-jo Gymnasium! Every festival, we ask foreign residents of Aizu to come share their culture/country with everyone. We will be accepting sign-ups for Stage Performances/Culture Booths/Food Stalls in July and August. Keep and eye out for more information in upcoming newsletters!



会津若松市国際交流協会 TEL (0242) 27-3703 EMAIL: [mail@awia.jp](mailto:mail@awia.jp)

**AIZU WAKAMATSU INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION**

## This Month in Aizu

### Mishima Town Artisan Craft Festival

Started in 1985, the Mishima Town Artisan Craft Festival brings in over 150 artists from all over the country to show off and sell their handmade goods. You will find a wonderful assortment of things from trinkets to jewelry, pottery, bags, and more! All made from all kinds of materials.



Buy wares! Try hands-on workshops! Eat Delicious Food!



#### Details:

**Date:** June 8th(Sat) and 9th(Sun)  
**Time:** 9:00-16:00 (Sunday until 15:00)  
**Place:** Mishima Town Local Crafts Museum (Mishima-machi, Nairi Suwanoue-395)

**Access:** Public Parking Available (shuttle busses to the venues from the parking lots)

**More Info:** <https://shorturl.at/CP7oh>  
<https://www.okuaizu-amikumi.jp/furusato-aizu-kojinmatsuri/>

### Aizu Firefly Festival

Summer is starting! This cute festival is back again! Enjoy unique stage events, and once the sun sets, you can see some of the cute fireflies come out to visit.



**Date:** June 22nd (Sat)

**Place:** KitaAizu Hotaru no Mori Park (KitaAizu-machi, shimoarai, miyanohigashi)

**Stage Events:** 10:00-21:00

(Yosakoi, local performers, and more!)

**Other:** Enjoy local foods, and festival vibes~

**Access:** Shuttle Bus from the Aizuwakamatsu City KitaAizu Branch Office (KitaAizu-machi, nakaarai, suwamae-11)



### Tsuruga-jo Tea Ceremony Workshop

**6/15 (Sat) (and more!)**

Enjoy an up close and personal tea ceremony inside the Rinkaku tea house. It's a rare treat, as visitors aren't usually allowed inside the tea house itself.

**Dates:** 6/15, 7/20, 9/28, 10/5

**Time:** 10:30, 12:45, 14:00 (45mins each)

**Place:** Rinkaku Tea House (Tsuruga-jo Castle)

**Limit:** 8 people/session

**Cost:** Adult: ¥1000 Child: ¥800 (entrance included)

**Contact:** City Tourism Division (0242-39-1251)

**More info:** <https://www.city.aizuwakamatsu.fukushima.jp/docs/2024041200043/>



### Isasumi Jinja: Iris Festival

**6/15 - 7/5**

With over 200 varieties of irises, the Isasumi Jinja gardens are a beautiful sight in May and June. Every year, around 300,000 people come to see the pretty purple flowers.

**Enjoy food stalls stage performances and more every Sat/Sun throughout the duration of the festival!**

**More Info:**

<https://isasumi.or.jp/ayameen.html>

<https://misatono.jp/calendar#month06>



### Manabeko Tsuruga-jo History Class

**6/30 (Sun) 13:30- ~15:30**

AizuWakamatsu City Local History Archives: Manabeko is a local history archive located right beside the Fukushima Prefectural Museum. It has free admission, and contains a variety of exhibitions and learning spaces. They also periodically hold lecture series! Join their highly popular Tsuruga-jo Culture Class. Learn about the buildings within Tsuruga-jo Castle, and life during the Edo Period. (in Japanese only)

**Place:** Tsuruga-jo Castle (outside)

**Limit:** 20 people, Elem. Gr. 5 and up

**Cost:** FREE!

**Sign-up Start:** June 4th (Tue)

**Sign-up/Contact:**

Local History Archive Manabeko - (0242-27-2705)

**More Details:** <https://manabeko.com/events/7004/>



### Aizu Swimming Pool Open

**6/23 (Sun) - 9/1 (Sun)**

**Place:** Aizu Swimming Pool (beside Tsuruga-jo Castle) (15 Jotomachi)

**Hours:** (Guests rotated out every 2hrs)

**9:30-11:30 • 12:30-14:30 • 15:00-17:00**

**Cost:** • Junior High and under: ¥30

• High School and up: ¥60

• General Admission: ¥130

(Free Admission July 15th (Mon) and Aug 21st (Wed))

**Closed:** Every Monday, and

Tournament Days

(6/29th-30th, 7/24th-26th, 8/17th-18th, 8/30th-31st)

**Contact:** Tsuruga-jo Gymnasium 0242-27-0111



## Member Spotlight

### Osama OMAR



Osama OMAR moved to Yanaizu, Fukushima from Toronto, Canada with his wife, Samila in 2022. The two of them have been a great help at the Association. Osama is always willing to share his unique multicultural background, and this month, Osama and Samila will be the guests of our 'Little Trip' Series. Come meet Osama and Samila (and their beautiful baby Aisha) and learn about Bangladesh!

For more information, check the event details on the front page.

## Life Lessons from a Citizen of the World



Hello everyone! My name is Osama Omar and I'm a JET for the Town of Yanaizu. These days, I'm also serving as a privately-contracted local government employee as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR). I work to promote international cooperation with Bangladesh and Canada, fostering cultural exchanges and helping to facilitate local events. I also teach English as a foreign language in my community and at the local schools in Yanaizu. So you might be asking, how did all this happen? Fate works in mysterious ways, and I hope to impart three life lessons that stuck out to me in my journey.

I often introduce myself as "a citizen of the world" because of how my story goes. Although I am a Canadian, I was born in Dhaka, Bangladesh. I was also very fortunate to have been raised in Japan, having lived here for 13 wonderful years of my childhood. I graduated



from elementary school (Grade 6) in Japan and afterwards, my family immigrated to Canada - settling in the very diverse and pluralistic melting pot known as the multicultural city of

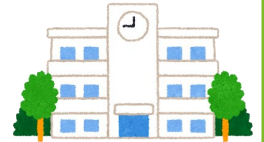
Toronto. As a child of three cultures, this helped me to grow up as a trilingual nomad. I gained a deep appreciation of how much the world is bigger and wider than I ever imagined. Especially now living in the countryside of Aizu, I never imagined how my inaka life would connect me back to my roots. So here's my first lesson: Life comes in a full circle. No matter which little corner of this great universe you go to, you will always have gifts to share with others.



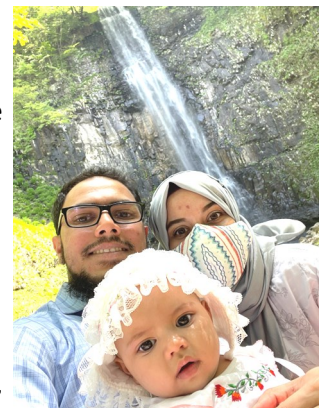
After my graduation from the University of Toronto, I was able to learn, share and explore different works through JICA and the Embassy of Japan. When I first arrived in Fukushima Prefecture, I was quite surprised to find out that a small township such as Yanaizu shared a connection with my birthplace of Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Mayor of Yanaizu town



and members of our local parliament had pre-existing friendships forged through years of cooperation and exchange. I learnt that the town of Yanaizu and local businesses helped to fundraise and sponsor to build schools, community centres and hospitals in Bangladesh. Due to my own experiences and knowledge, a unique opportunity presented itself - and thus, I was offered a position as a CIR to be a bridge for both cultures. So here's my second lesson: Never neglect any given opportunity when it presents itself. From sharing our dreams, hopes and aspirations - we enrich each other's lives together through shared beliefs, values and ideals. You never know where it will lead and what adventure life has in store!



I truly believe that despite our different ethnicities, religions or the colors of our skin - the thread of humanity ties together a world of harmony and acceptance. From conducting cooking classes with my wife Samila, to showcasing Bangladesh tradition and celebrations to people in Aizu with my baby daughter, Aisha - it has been nothing but a humbling, yet exceedingly rewarding experience. So I conclude with my final lesson: Never forget your roots! It will follow you wherever you go, so be an ambassador of your culture. Be proud of your identity and tell your story. For that, I am hopeful as I look to the future. I want to discover more and expand my horizons. I am grateful to be a part of this incredible community at the Aizu-Wakamatsu International Association. I want to continue to be a vibrant bridge for cultures and traditions - one born from collaboration and exchange, connecting Japan to the world.






Osama, Samila, and baby Aisha

# Events in June

## Other Information



1	SA	13:00 Kanji-kai Meeting 15:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
2	SU	Closed
3	MO	Closed
4	TU	
5	WE	
6	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
7	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
8	SA	9:30 Hello World Club 14:00 General Members Meeting (office closed from 12:00)
9	SU	Closed
10	MO	Closed
11	TU	
12	WE	
13	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
14	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
15	SA	10:00 FIND English Convo. Circle 10:00 Satellite JICA Desk 15:00 High Schoolers' Discussion 15:00 Children's Nihongo Hiroba
16	SU	Closed
17	MO	Closed
18	TU	
19	WE	
20	TH	18:30 Japanese Conversation Class (PM)
21	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
22	SA	9:30 Hello World Club
23	SU	Closed
24	MO	Closed
25	TU	
26	WE	
27	TH	
28	FR	10:00 Japanese Conversation Class (AM)
29	SA	10:00 'Little Trip' Series: Bangladesh 13:30 Newsletter Preparation
30	SU	Closed

# #SamurAizu

Follow [@samuraizu\\_official](https://www.instagram.com/samuraizu_official) on Instagram! It's the official English Instagram of the AizuWakamatsu Tourism Bureau, run by SamurAizu Ambassadors (members of the Association!) Check it out to see the beauty of Aizu and support your local community. Use #samuraizu to show off Aizu to the world!

## Multicultural Kids Camp: Fukushima 2024

### Camp For Kids with Diverse Backgrounds

A multicultural summer camp experience with other people with diverse backgrounds! Stay overnight, study, and play! Aimed at kids who have roots outside of Japan to meet others with different backgrounds, living all over Fukushima Prefecture. Parents/Guardians are welcome to join in, and can take the opportunity to talk about raising children in Japan.

**Date:** July 6th (Sat) 11:45 - July 7th (Sun) 14:00

**Place:** National Bandai Youth Friendship Centre (Kokuritsu Bandai Seishonen Kouryuu no ie) (7136-1 Gorinpara, Inawashiro, Yama District)

**Participants:** up to 30 people (aged 6-18)

- Children born and/or raised outside of Japan
- Children of Non-Japanese Nationals etc.
- Parents/Guardians of the above children

(Children can participate without Parents/Guardians, and Parents/Guardians can participate individually as well. For children under 12 to participate without a guardian, please consult the organizer before sign-up.)

**Cost:** ¥3000 per person

**Sign-Up:** Deadline **June 6th (Thu)**, sign by TEL or e-mail

**Contact:** SASAKI Chikako TEL: 090-7523-8132  
horainihongo1998@gmail.com



### Hello World Club - June 8, June 22

Hello World Club is an event for Elementary School students to interact with and learn about other cultures! Each day features a different member of our Community.

This month is Nigeria and Canada!



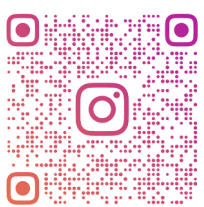
### Call for Newsletter Volunteers!

Come help us fold, stamp, and pack our monthly publications for mailing! No need to sign up, just drop by if you can!

**Date:** June 29th, Saturday

**Time:** 13:30~

**Place:** Aizu Wakamatsu International Association Office



### We're on Instagram!

Follow us for photos and news about our upcoming events!



AWIA\_PHOTO

<https://facebook.com/awiajp>



Visit our Facebook page for updates in multiple languages!



Use this QR Code to access our email form to sign-up for events