



[The Nippon Foundation News] October Greetings

Greetings from The Nippon Foundation. With an increasing number of people receiving vaccinations and new coronavirus infections dropping dramatically across Japan, the most recent state of emergency, initially declared for Tokyo on July 12 with other regions subsequently added, was allowed to expire on September 30. This marks the first time that no state-of-emergency or quasi-state-of-emergency measures have been in place nationwide since early April. Nevertheless, restrictions are being lifted in stages, and people are being asked to remain vigilant against a possible sixth wave of infections this winter. Restaurants are once again allowed to sell alcohol, but are requested to close by 9:00 pm. The cap on the number of spectators for professional baseball and soccer games has been raised to 10,000 from 5,000, and systems to check people's proof of COVID-19 vaccination or negative test result are being implemented on a trial basis.

In Tokyo's famous Ginza shopping district, the main thoroughfare is traditionally closed to vehicular traffic on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, creating a "pedestrians' paradise." This was discontinued during the states of emergency, however, as people were requested to refrain from non-essential outings. With the state of emergency now lifted, the street is once again a pedestrians' paradise and people are gradually returning, although not yet in pre-pandemic numbers.



People are gradually returning to the pedestrian paradise on Ginza's Chuo Dori, also known as 'Ginza Avenue,' on October 2 (left) and October 9 (right)

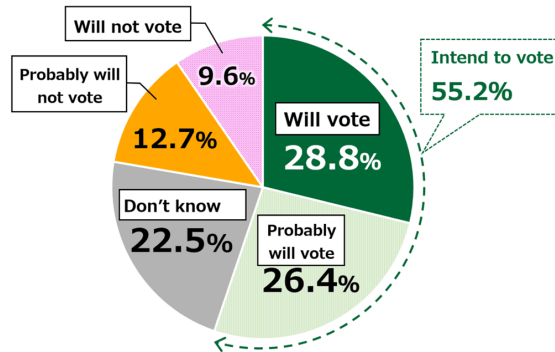
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Awareness Survey of 18-Year-Olds

National Election

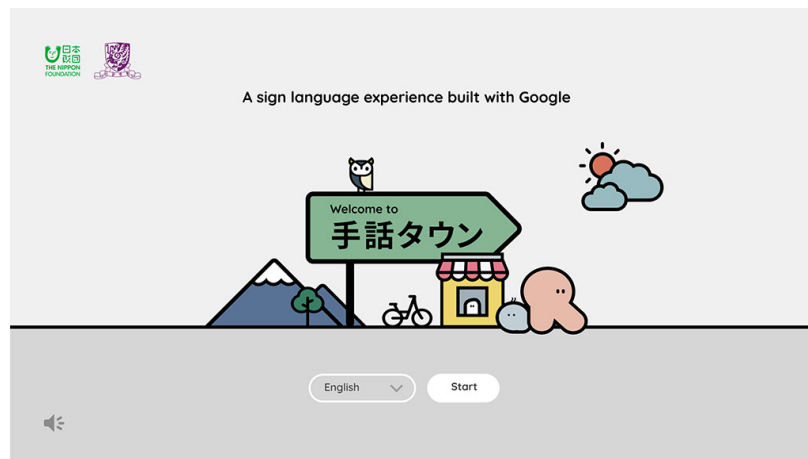


The 41st installment of the Awareness Survey of 18-Year-Olds was carried out on the subject of the "National Election." With the current term of the Lower House of Japan's Diet (parliament) set to end in October, an election will be held by sometime in November at the latest. The survey found that 55% of respondents intend to vote in the election, and issues related to health and hygiene, including coronavirus infections and vaccines, were viewed as the highest priority issue for the election by both male and female respondents.

[Full Article](#)

SignTown Officially Released on Sept. 22

AI recognition sign language learning game offers gateway to Deaf culture



A media event was held at The Nippon Foundation's head office in Tokyo on September 22 to mark the official launch of the SignTown game for teaching sign language. Since the launch of the beta version in May, roughly 8,500 people have used the site, and various improvements have been made based on their feedback. SignTown marks a breakthrough in sign language recognition technology, with the ability to recognize signs using a conventional two-dimensional camera attached to a personal computer.

[Full Article](#)

'Better Life Better Place' for the Elderly and Children Program

Joint project launched by MetLife Foundation and The Nippon Foundation

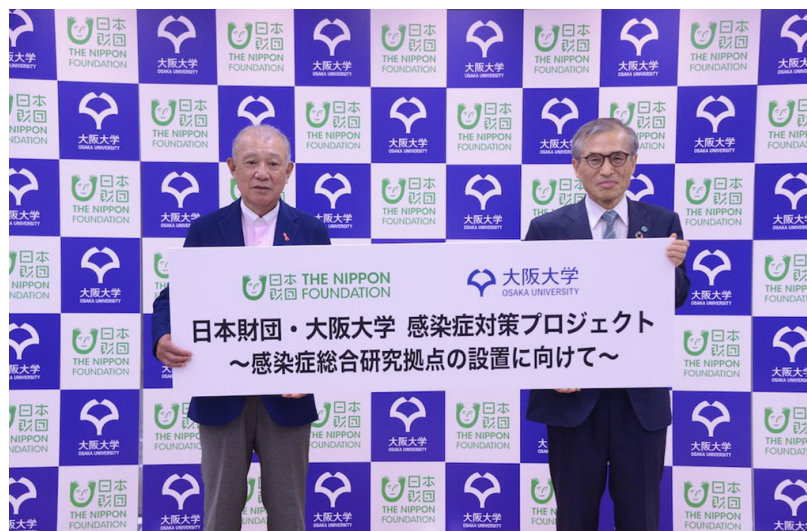


The Nippon Foundation and MetLife Foundation have announced the launch of “MetLife Foundation x The Nippon Foundation: ‘Better Life Better Place’ for the Elderly and Children,” a program to develop twelve care facilities for older persons and children across Japan. The Nippon Foundation will operate the facilities and MetLife Japan employees will have opportunities to support them through volunteer programs, including much-needed support for users and care workers and educational and financial empowerment programs for children.

[Full Article](#)

The Nippon Foundation - Osaka University Infectious Disease Response Project

Plan announced to establish world-class center for general research on infectious diseases



The Nippon Foundation and Osaka University have announced The Nippon Foundation - Osaka University Infectious Disease Project to establish a center for general research on infectious diseases. Addressing the social issue of emerging infectious diseases as highlighted by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, the project will pursue open innovation with the aim of protecting people’s lives from the threat of future pandemics while at the same time maintaining social and economic activity.

[Full Article](#)



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