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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation  
– newsletter editing volunteers  
<https://www.himeji-iec.or.jp>



### <People> Mr. Buddhika Weerasinghe (Sri Lanka)

Buddhika is from Moratuwa, about 20km south of Colombo (former capital of Sri Lanka). Moratuwa is a city popular for its fishing industry and woodwork products. He is now working as a freelance photographer, mainly in the Kansai area. He also often works as a lecturer in the International Understanding Delivery Course, which is offered by the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation.

Q: Tell us about Sri Lanka.

A: The official languages of Sri Lanka are Sinhalese and Tamil. In my region, people speak Sinhalese. Sinhalese is mostly spoken at home or school, though English is also widely used. To get a job at a big company, such as a bank, we need to be fluent in English.  
As for food, we often have curry. In Sri Lanka, we eat curry with rice, similar to Japan.

Q: What brought you to Japan?

A: When I was working as a photojournalist at a newspaper company in Sri Lanka, I met a Japanese woman and married her. I have lived in Japan since 2009.

Q: What kind of activities do you do as a photographer?

A: Since coming to Japan, I have been taking photos of world sports championships, media reports, traditional festivals around the Kansai area, Himeji castle and more. I use various lenses, including telephoto lenses, and cameras which best suit the setting. These photographs are being published through international news agencies.

Q: Tell us about your plans or dreams in the future.

A: I'd like to edit my photos about the civil war in Sri Lanka and how people were living at that time and publish them as a photographic collection.

## The 2020 Population Census

This year, the Population Census, which comes around every five years, will be conducted. It is an important survey, which all the registered households must answer regardless of nationality or age. Various statistics from this survey are used for national or local governments' welfare and disaster prevention measures etc., so please be sure to respond.



Q: To whom is the survey applicable?

A: All individuals and households residing in Japan as of October, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. This includes foreign residents too.

Q: What kind of survey is it?

A: Enumerators will visit each household from mid-September to distribute documents for the Census. The purpose of the questionnaire will be explained through intercoms, and the documents will be distributed by putting them into mailboxes in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19. If nobody is available, the documents will be put directly into mailboxes without the explanation.

Q: What is the procedure?

A: The answers can be submitted on the internet or by mail, and is due by October 7<sup>th</sup>. Six languages are available on the internet; English, Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, Spanish and Vietnamese.



Q: What kind of questions are asked?

A: Fifteen questions about household members, such as gender and birthdate. As well as four questions about the household, including the number of household members and type of household.

Q: Will the results be announced?

A: Initially, preliminary population statistics will be announced in February, 2021. Then basic data, including population of each generation and status of households will be announced by September, 2021. However, they may be delayed due to COVID-19.

The announced survey results can be viewed on the Statics Bureau of Japan's homepage or in prefectural libraries.

※Submitted answers will be only used for statistical purposes.



# A New Lifestyle

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen a great number of people all over the world seriously affected or even dead. Although there are some who have only light symptoms, the patients can suddenly fall into critical condition due to onset of pneumonia.

In Japan, we were required to stay home under the state of emergency declaration. We have been greatly affected in every sector of life: sporting events, theater performances ... the list goes on.

A temporary subsidence of the epidemic does not mean that the virus has gone away. What is crucially important for us from now on is to know how to maintain our regular life while keeping the virus at bay. Here are some important points to keep in mind.

## Fundamental measures to take

- Do not go out when you feel feverish.
- Be sure to wear a mask when you go out.
- Upon returning home, be sure cleanse your hands with hand sanitizer or wash with soap.



Be sure to wash palms, the back of your hands, between the fingers, finger tips under the nails, and wrists. Lastly, rinse off soap under running water.

- Sanitize furniture, such as tables, chairs, and door knobs frequently.
- Try to avoid the three C's

- Confined and enclosed spaces with poor ventilation.

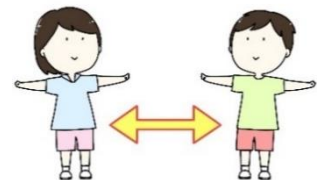
Try to circulate air periodically by opening the windows and doors, even when air-conditioners are on.

- Close-contact settings, especially where people have close-range conversations

Maintain at least 2 meters' distance between people. Two people stretching their arms respectively would give "2 meters".

- Crowded places with many people nearby

Try to go shopping when there are fewer shoppers. Avoid going shopping in a group.



Make a shopping list beforehand so you can save time on shopping.

## A New Normal

- If possible, make good use of the systems like remote working or staggered working hours.
- Try a "rolling stock method" on masks and antiseptic solution. Have a small stock of these things initially. Every time you use up one bottle or one pack, make additional purchases to make up for the loss, so that you can rely on a stable supply at home.
- Consider making good use of the Internet by studying or shopping online. Remote get-togethers with friends are also on the rise. Let's start by tackling things which are within our control, such as stocking up on provisions, and adjusting to the new normal.

## Autumn Leaves Sightseeing Spots

When it becomes cool in the morning and at night, the leaves turn yellow and red. There are many places to see the beautiful fall colors in Himeji.

### ◆ Around Himeji Castle

#### ① Ginkgo trees on the Otemae-dori Avenue

There are rows of golden yellow ginkgo trees in front of Himeji Castle. It's a good photo spot.

#### ② The Rooftop of Egret Himeji

You can get a good view of the autumn leaves around Himeji Castle.

#### ③ Himeyama park

A beautiful park with maple trees located on the north side of Himeji Castle.

#### ④ The Path of Sen-Hime

A promenade along the river on the west side of Himeji Castle, where many Japanese maple trees are planted.

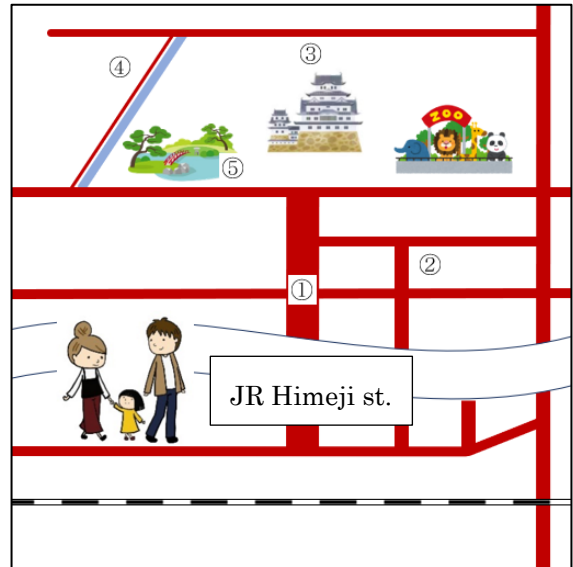
#### ⑤ Koko-en

It's a popular spot to enjoy a Japanese garden and autumn leaves at the same time. There are Japanese maples, Mountain maples, Weeping maples, *Kaede* maples, etc.

【Admission time】 9:00a.m.-5:00p.m.

【Entrance fee】 Adult (over 18 years old) 310 yen

Student (elementary school, junior high school, high school) 150 yen



Koko-en

### ◆ Shoshazan Engyoji Temple

The Mt. Shosha maple festival is held every year during the fall colors.

During the festival, the trees are illuminated and there is a special cultural exhibition.

Maple trees, Ginkgo trees and others turn red and yellow.

【Admission fee】 Adult 500 yen, under high school students are free.

【Ropeway fee】 Adult : one-way 600 yen, round trip 1,000 yen

Children : one-way 300 yen, round trip 500 yen



Shoshazan  
Engyoji Temple



Shosha  
Ropeway

### ◆ Sakurayama Park

On the west side of Himeji is an area where the Himeji City Science Museum, Hoshinoko Yakata, Hyogo Children's Center, Shizen Kansatsu no Mori and a large lawn are located. It's a beautiful place with wild cherry trees in spring and maple trees in autumn. We can learn about and interact with nature here.



Sakurayama  
Park

※When planning to visit any of these locations, please confirm the details beforehand

## *Takikomi-Gohan* feels like Autumn!

“*Takikomi-Gohan*” is a Japanese rice dish made with various ingredients.

Beans, mushrooms, potatoes, seaweed, and root vegetables, which have lots of fiber, are good ingredients for *Takikomi-Gohan*. Adding meats or seafoods is tasty too. Adding vegetables brings a good nutritional balance.

If you use seasonal ingredients, you can enjoy the seasonal taste. Here is a recipe for “*Takikomi-Gohan*” with Autumn mushrooms.



### Mushroom *Takikomi-Gohan*

#### «Ingredients (Serve 4)»

Rice . . . . . 3 rice cooker cups  
*Shiitake* mushroom . . . . 4~6 pcs  
*Shimeji* mushroom . . . . 1 pack  
*Enokitake* mushroom . . . . 1 pack  
Deep-fried *tofu* pouch . . . . 2 pcs

A { Soy sauce . . . . . 3 Tbsp  
    *Sake* . . . . . 2 Tbsp  
    Salt . . . . . 1/2 Tsp  
    *Dashi* powder . . . . 1 Tbsp

#### «Method»

- ① Wash the rice and transfer it into a sieve and drain completely for about 30 mins.
  - ② Remove the mushroom stems. Cut the *shiitake* into thin slices, break the *shimeji* into small bunches and cut the *enokitake* in half lengthwise. Pour hot water onto the deep-fried *tofu* pouch. Cut in half and then cut into thin 5mm slices.
  - ③ Place the rice from ① and seasoning ingredients from ‘A’ in the rice cooker and add water up to “level 3” of white rice in the rice cooker. Place ingredients from ② on top of the rice. For maximum flavor, do not mix the ingredients with the rice.
  - ④ Lightly stir the rice and ingredients and serve in a bowl. Sprinkle ginkgo nuts or snow peas on top to make it look tastier.
- ※ If you leave *Takikomi-Gohan* on the “keep warm” function in the rice cooker, the taste will change. Put in a container and store it in the fridge or freezer.

#### Tips to cook perfect rice

Rice is very delicate. Depending on seasons and rice brands, the amount of water used and texture of the steamed rice will be different.

Follow the basic rules like measuring the rice properly, washing the rice, draining the rice in a sieve, stirring soon once the rice is done cooking, etc., to cook rice to perfection.



## ☆Announcements from the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation☆

### ■ “日本語ひろば Kids” has Started

The Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation has started “日本語ひろば Kids”, which is Japanese class for elementary and junior high school students who are studying Japanese, in September. It's held at Egret Himeji from 2:45 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. every Sunday and it's free. You can join the class at any time, even after the term has already started. If you would like to study Japanese more, get help with homework, or make friends outside school, please join us. See the contact information below if you are interested.



### ◆◆◆Letter from the Editor◆◆◆

This summer, in addition to the humidity and heat, we had to wear masks to prevent infection of COVID-19, which made us even more uncomfortable. Exciting summer events like fireworks festivals were also cancelled. Though we can't drop our guard, even now, the weather will be comfortable soon and there will be more opportunities to go out. Let's enjoy it while also conforming to the new normal.



#### Disaster Prevention Vocabulary of This Issue

しんすい  
浸水 shinsui: Submerge

(Ex) ゆかしたしんすい  
床下浸水: Yukashita-shinsui: Submerge under the floor

ゆかうえしんすい  
床上浸水: Yukaue-shinsui: Submerge over the floor

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Their assistance is much appreciated

You can read previous issues of “VIVA!ひめじ” on the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation's website (International Exchange Section) (<https://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/>).

The next issue will be published December 2020.

We welcome your comments and suggestions. We are also looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions. If you are interested, please contact us at the following address.

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