

KITAKYUSHU CITY NEWS LETTER

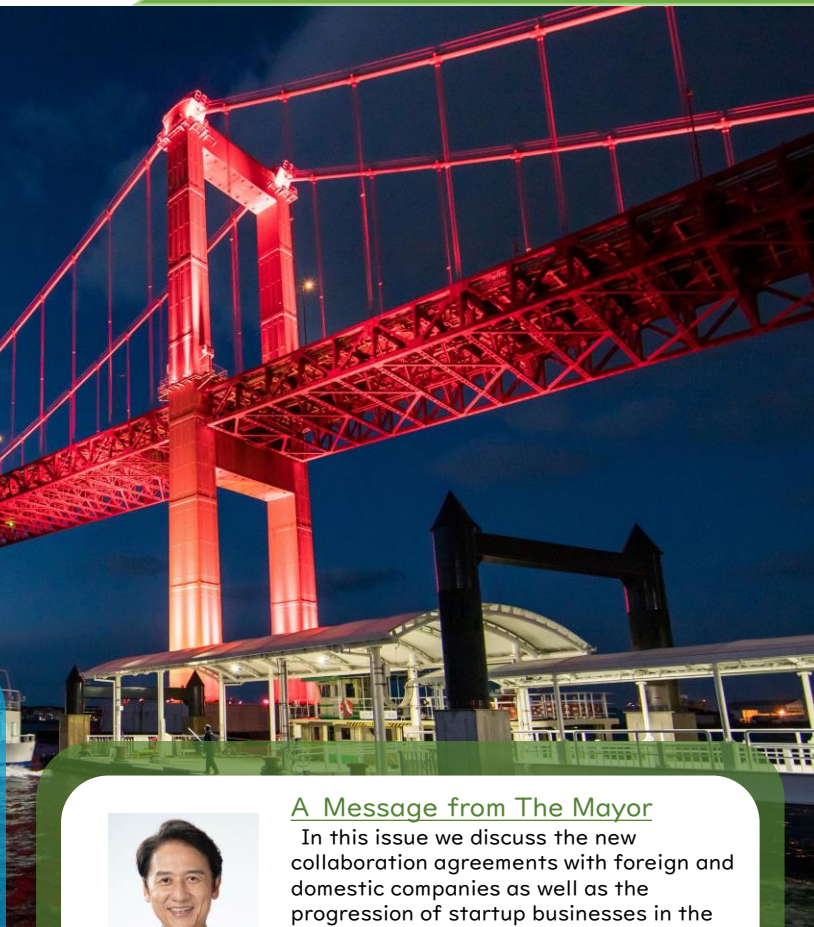


みらい
つなぐ
北九州 60th

*A Green Growth City Full of Pure Richness Ready
to be Shared with the World*

ISSUE | 03
FEBRUARY 2024

Wakato Bridge



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- Events & Misc.



Kojiro Takashiro
Mayor of Kitakyushu City

A Message from The Mayor

In this issue we discuss the new collaboration agreements with foreign and domestic companies as well as the progression of startup businesses in the city. I hope that through this news letter, you will have a greater interest in Kitakyushu and become more knowledgeable about our city.

60th Anniversary of the City's Founding ~Connecting Kitakyushu with the Future~

Kitakyushu City was formed on February 10, 1963.

It was created through the unique merger of five pre-existing cities (Moji City, Kokura City, Wakamatsu City, Yahata City, and Tobata City). 60 years have passed since then, and in this milestone year, we continue and strive for the further development of our city and its bright future.

Using the catchphrase "Connecting Kitakyushu with the Future," we are carrying out anniversary projects throughout the entire year. In these projects, we will further promote the advancement of initiatives aimed at SDGs and carbon neutrality, as well as promote the attractions of the city, including its nature, culture, and manufacturing industries. We are hopeful that this will deepen the feeling of civic pride of our city, especially amongst the younger generations. Our city will continue to work hard to connect its civilians with the future.

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Environmental Business

First in Japan!

India's largest environmental industry company establishes a Japanese corporation in Kitakyushu City!

~A great opportunity for overseas expansion of environmentally-related companies of Kitakyushu city~

Ramky Group signs collaboration agreement with Kitakyushu



Ramky Group, India's largest environmental industry company, which aims to develop a recycling plant in India, modeled after Kitakyushu City's Eco-town, has established its first Japanese subsidiary in Kitakyushu City. This is **the first time** that an Indian environmental industry company has established such a corporation in Japan.

This cooperation entails a comprehensive collaboration agreement with the Ramky Group and its Japanese subsidiary would help to promote Kitakyushu's international environmental business in India.

Using this opportunity, Kitakyushu City will work with the group to improve the environmental issues in India, including waste management, as well as support the overseas expansion of environmentally-related companies in the city.

Collaboration Agreement Points

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| (1) Developing environmental human resources in India | ➔ | Building local networks in India, support from Kitakyushu companies with a shortage of human resources |
| (2) Collaboration between local (Kitakyushu) companies and Indian companies | ➔ | Export of products, technology, and know-how, support for overseas expansion of local companies |
| (3) Formation of environmental projects targeted for India | ➔ | Creation of new environmental businesses |
| (4) Joint research in the environmental field with companies, universities, etc. in the city | ➔ | Strengthening academic research functions in Kitakyushu city |



Environmental Business

Sister City for the Environment: Delegation from Davao City, Philippines Visits Kitakyushu! ~Learning Advanced Waste Management Practices~

Kitakyushu City and Davao City, Philippines, entered into a 'Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Sister City Partnership' in 2017. They have since conducted surveys on waste disposal conditions in Davao City, implemented initiatives for waste reduction, and engaged in personnel development related to waste management.

Since April 2022, JICA grassroots technical cooperation project (special framework for community revitalization) which focused on the improvement of waste separation, collection, and transportation techniques, has been implemented. During this visit, a delegation from Davao City, including city council members and municipal officials, visited Kitakyushu City. Through activities such as inspecting waste disposal facilities, they gained insights into waste management practices in Kitakyushu City.

【Implementation Period】 November 13-22, 2023

【Visit Destination】 Kitakyushu City Hall (Courtesy Call to the Chief Executive of Environment Bureau)
Kogasaki Incineration Facility
Hiagari Incineration Facility (renovated)
Takamiya Environment Museum
Hiagari Can and Bottle Recycling Center
Kitakyushu City Ichimaru Elementary School, etc.



First in Japan

Promoting decarbonization with the Kitakyushu Airport Bus using 100% pure renewable resource-derived fuel!

Nishitetsu Bus Kitakyushu Co., Ltd., Itochu Enex Co., Ltd., and the City of Kitakyushu, in collaboration with Neste OYJ, a manufacturer of renewable resource-derived fuel (renewable fuel), have launched a demonstration operation of buses using 100% Renewable Diesel (RD) as an alternative fuel to conventional light oil. This initiative is aimed at vigorously promoting the decarbonization of Kitakyushu Airport. The buses undergoing this demonstration will be the first shared buses in Japan to travel on highways using RD.



【Operational Route】 Kitakyushu Airport Bus
(Kokura to Kitakyushu Airport Line)

【Operating Period】 August 7, 2023, to March 31, 2024

【Demonstration Details】 Substituting conventional fuel with RD in one of the bus vehicles operating on the mentioned route and verifying the impact on the vehicle, fuel, CO2 reduction effects, etc.

Japan's highest level of solar panel recycling initiative has been certified as the Kitakyushu Eco-Town Project!

A local company, Recycle Tech Co., Ltd. (Koyomachi, Wakamatsu-ku), conducting operations in the solar panel recycling business, has recently been certified as part of the 'Kitakyushu Eco-Town Project'!



Solar Panels

- Utilizing Japan's first continuous EVA thermal decomposition processing furnace, the facility enables resource recycling of aluminum, copper, silicon cells (silver), and glass through advanced sorting lines. It conducts the recycling of 90,000 solar panels annually.
- The EVA resin, which can be thermally decomposed with a high recycling rate of over 82% for material recycling, is also capable of thermal recycling.

【What is the Kitakyushu Eco-Town Project Certification?】

Recognizing initiatives contributing to the establishment of a resource-circulating and decarbonized society, certifying projects with novelty and uniqueness, and striving to activate the environmental industry.

With this certification, the Eco-Town Project (companies) now totals 27 projects (25 companies).

Achieving two million visitors to the Kitakyushu Eco-Town!

Since the start of the Kitakyushu Eco-Town Project in 1997, it has garnered significant attention both domestically and internationally, with numerous visitors coming to explore the site.

The number of visitors has finally surpassed two million! In commemoration of achieving two million visitors, a celebratory ceremony was held.



【What is the Kitakyushu Eco-Town Project?】

The Kitakyushu Eco-Town Project aims to utilize all types of waste as raw materials in other industrial sectors, ultimately achieving zero waste (zero emissions) and promoting the establishment of a resource-circulating society.

In Kitakyushu City, a 'Kitakyushu Eco-Town Plan' has been formulated, with the promotion of the environmental and recycling industry as its core. This plan, approved by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Ministry of the Environment, involves concrete projects throughout the entire city of Kitakyushu.

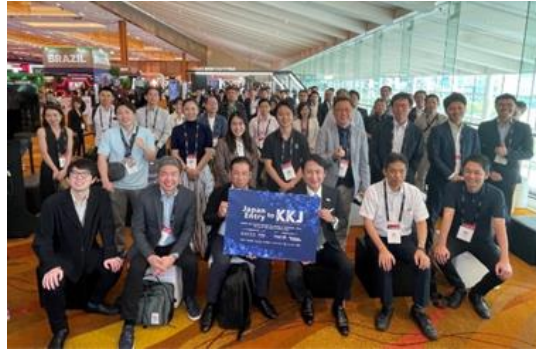
First Overseas
Top Sales!

At the startup event SWITCH held in Singapore, the Mayor conducted top sales!

At the venue of the annual Asia's largest startup event, the Singapore Week of Innovation & Technology (SWITCH), held in Singapore, the promotional event, Japan Entry to KKJ (Kitakyushu, Japan) was conducted by the city. (Organized by: Kitakyushu City, JETRO)

At the event, the Mayor of Kitakyushu City took the stage, introducing the investment environment, potential, and initiatives in supporting startups in Kitakyushu City. This served as an appeal for Singaporean startups to consider entering their business in Kitakyushu City.

For the organization of the event, collaboration was established with WingArc | st Corporation and the Singapore Economic Development Board. Additionally, representatives from TOTO Corporation, Kyushu Institute of Technology, and three local startups in the city also participated as speakers.



First-time
Participation
for Overseas
Startups!

Strong Support for the Domestic and International Expansion of Four Startups! (2023 Global Acceleration Program)



The city of Kitakyushu is implementing the 'Global Acceleration Program (GAP-K),' which supports the global expansion of startups. Four companies have been selected for support in 2023.

This initiative, conducted in the form of an executive committee by private enterprises and financial institutions, provides mentorship and support from experts for startups expected to thrive in Kitakyushu, with a focus on accelerating growth and global expansion."

<Selected companies>

Company Name	Place	Business
Milalink Co., Ltd.	Kokura Kita-ku, Kitakyushu City	Manufacturing technology(metal processing)
LIGHT-RIGHT Inc.	Miyazaki Prefecture	Business succession for small and medium-sized enterprises
Piezo Sonic Corporation	Tokyo	Logistics (independent transportation), energy saving
SoundEye	Singapore (Not yet established in Japan)	Welfare facilities, watching over the elderly

COMPASS Kokura 5th Year Anniversary Event Held! ~Take your business to the stars~

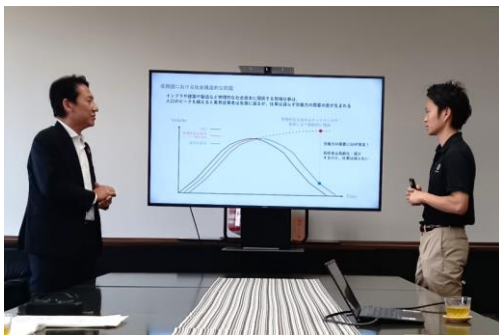


Kitakyushu City's core facility for business start-up support, COMPASS Kokura (officially known as Kitakyushu Telework Center), celebrated its 5th anniversary since its renewal opening back in 2018.

To celebrate this milestone, a 5th year anniversary event was held with the aim of further developing the startup ecosystem and accelerating initiatives. The event was full of activities, including panel sessions on the theme of space business and pitches by students, startups, and others.




Representatives of Quand Co., Ltd. and Mayor Takeuchi exchange opinions! ~The future of Kitakyushu City's startup support measures~



Mayor Takeuchi met with Representative Shimooka of Quando Co., Ltd., which is active all over the country by promoting DX as their specialty.

Quando Co., Ltd. is **the first** startup headquartered in Kitakyushu City to be selected as a "J-Startup" by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and is a representative startup of Kitakyushu City.

【Quando Co., Ltd.】  **QUANDO**

Quando specializes in the development of "SynQ Remote," a video calling app for on-site use that enables professional supervision from a distance.



Yamato Transport Co., Ltd. and Kitakyushu City logistics collaboration agreement ~A new way of transport starting from Kitakyushu City!~

Starting in April 2024, Yamato Transport plans to begin jointly operating domestic cargo flights using Kitakyushu Airport as one of its bases.

Taking advantage of the launch of the cargo flight, a logistics collaboration agreement was created on July 18th to further strengthen the partnership between Kitakyushu City, which has a rich logistics infrastructure, and Yamato Transport, which aims to develop its business using said infrastructure.

Details on the specific efforts of the cooperation agreement:

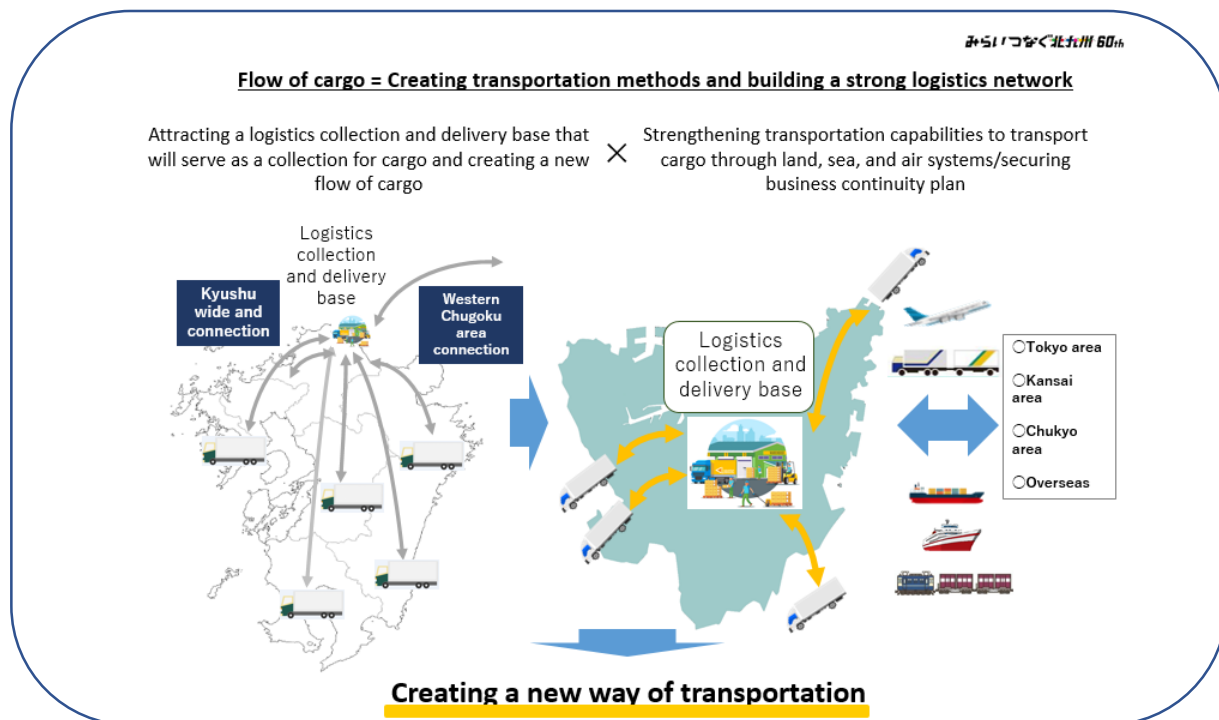
- ① Joint promotion of cargo-only flights by both parties
- ② Intake of new cargo, such as semiconductor-related cargo, from the Kyushu-wide network.

Through these efforts, Kitakyushu City's logistics infrastructure will be further utilized to:

- ① Build a strong logistics network and increase the competitiveness of local industries
- ② Create a new flow of cargo in the Kyushu area, such as semiconductors and agricultural and marine products, resulting in companies expanding and jobs being created.
- ③ Strengthen Kitakyushu's partnership with Yamato Transport, one of the largest companies in the transport industry.



It is expected that the presence of Kitakyushu City as a logistics base will be instantly increased, and it will be a major opportunity for Kitakyushu City to make a leap forward as a logistics base.



New research base opened in Kitakyushu Academic Research City! ~Researching diamond semiconductors, which are said to be the ultimate semiconductor~ Power Diamond Systems Co., Ltd.

Joint research between Waseda University venture company and Kyushu Institute of Technology

Power Diamond Systems Co., Ltd. (PDS) has established a research base in Kitakyushu Academic Research City (Kitakyushu R&D Center) to conduct joint research with Kyushu Institute of Technology (Next Generation Power Electronics Research Center) toward the practical application of diamond semiconductors.

Diamond semiconductors are excellent in large current/high voltage control and energy saving effects, and are expected to be put to practical use in next-generation power electronics* fields such as electric vehicles (EV).

*Power electronics: Technology that converts the type of electricity (direct current/alternating current) and voltage.

It is also attracting attention for its potential use in outer space because of its ability to operate even in environments with high radiation doses.



(August 2023) Meeting with the Mayor

【Kitakyushu Academic Research City】



A research, development and industry-academia collaboration base that opened in April 2001 in Wakamatsu Ward, Kitakyushu City, Fukuoka Prefecture.

It is the only institution in Japan that brings together science and technology-related public and private universities, research institutes, and advanced companies onto the same campus to conduct educational research and industry-academia collaborative activities related to cutting-edge science and technology.

Kitakyushu City Tour conducted for diplomatic corps in Japan! ~Feel the Green Future and Rich Past of Kitakyushu~



On July 18th and 19th, 2023, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, a "Kitakyushu City Tour" for a group of diplomatic corps stationed in Japan was held. During the visit, various facilities and sites related to deepening the understanding of Kitakyushu City's history, distinctive cuisine, and culture were visited. Companies that represent the manufacturing industry of Kitakyushu and advanced companies related to the environment and eco-friendly technology were also introduced to the tour group.

One of the major highlights of the tour was the fishing experience in the Kanmon Strait. Fish that were caught by the participants in the activity were later served at lunch, as either a fried-fish dish or sashimi, at the water-side restaurant Buzen, near the fishing port.



A full-fledged musical performance by the Virginia Governor's School for the Arts in the United States! ~SING! ~

American students, studying musical and theatrical arts, from the Governor's School for the Arts, (GSA for short) in Norfolk, Virginia had visited Kitakyushu in early November 2023. Norfolk is one of Kitakyushu's two sister cities located in the US and this was the first time in 4 years that GSA students had visited the city. The students participated in homestays, had interacted with local junior-high and high school students of Kitakyushu in school exchanges, and top it all off, held a musical performance for the citizens of Kitakyushu.

This was the 8th time that GSA students had set-up a performance in Kitakyushu City, and like always, it was very well received by the audience.



2 months in Kitakyushu City learning about firefighting techniques and disaster prevention!

~2023 JICA Firefighting and Disaster Prevention Training Course~

JICA's Firefighting and Disaster Prevention training course is an international cooperation project in which the Fire and Disaster Management Agency of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and the Kitakyushu City Fire Department collaborate to accept firefighting personnel from around the world and provide them with training on firefighting techniques.

The initiative is aimed at strengthening disaster prevention, response capabilities, economic development, and improving welfare in the participants' home countries.

It has been held since 1988 and has accepted 292 trainees from 86 countries and regions, making this year the 34th time it has been held.



Welsh Government representative to Japan visits Kitakyushu City ~Reliving the Rugby World Cup excitement of Mikuni World Stadium~

The new representative of the Welsh Government to Japan, who took up his post in June 2023, visited Kitakyushu to tour the city's facilities and discuss future exchanges.

Kitakyushu City and Wales (one of the countries that makes up the United Kingdom) have been actively engaged in sports and cultural exchanges since the Rugby World Cup in 2019. The field of exchange, however, is expanding beyond sports, with a joint startup exchange event being held back in October 2022.



Kokura Castle is certified as a Japan's Night View Heritage!

~A beautiful Kitakyushu night view was selected
by night view masters from all over the country~



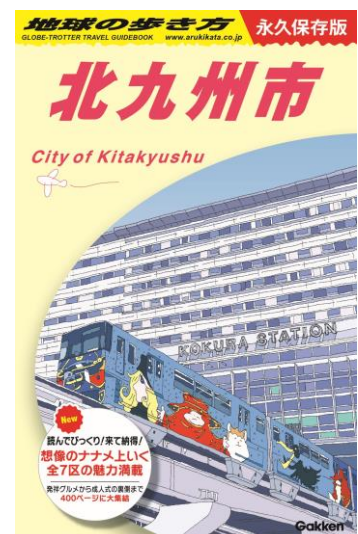
The company Night View Convention Bureau, had held a vote for the 18th Japan Night View Heritage conducted by 33 Night View Masters (Night Viewer Level 1 holders) and their executive office.

Out of the 160 night view applications from all over the country, the illuminated night view of Kokura Castle was selected and became Kitakyushu City's 9th "Japanese Night View Heritage".

First edition of a Japanese
designated-city!

Globe-Trotter Travel Guidebook City of Kitakyushu now on sale!

The Kitakyushu Edition of the *Globe-Trotter Travel Guidebook* (Chikyuu no Arukikata Kitakyushu-shi), which announced its plans for publication back in July 2023, is finally on sale in bookstores nation-wide and online. This well-known Japanese book series, explains in detail of the charm and must-see locations in countries around the world. This edition will be their first edition of any designated-city in Japan. The cover illustration is the iconic scene in which the monorail train departs from the Kokura Station building.



A film supported by the
Kitakyushu Film
Commission

Great Absence directed by Kei Chikaura

Officially invited to the 48th Toronto International Film Festival Competition Section
World premiere!

71st San Sebastian International Film Festival

Winner of “Ateneo Guipuzcoano Award” and “Best Actor Award”!!

The film *Great Absence*, supported by the Kitakyushu Film Commission, had its world premiere in the Platform competition section of the 48th Toronto International Film Festival. This work is directed by Kitakyushu native Kei Chikaura and is set in Kitakyushu.

He is the second Japanese director to be invited to this category, after Kiyoshi Kurosawa.

The film was also selected for the Official Competition section of the 71st San Sebastian International Film Festival, and won the Ateneo Guipuzcoano Award, which is awarded to any one film regardless of screening category. The film’s featured actor, Tatsuya Fuji had also won the Silver Shell Award (Best Actor Award).

The release of “Great Absence” is scheduled for 2024.



© SSIFF - Photo: Pablo Gómez

Kitakyushu Pop Culture Festival 2023 was held!

On November 25th and 26th, 2023, Kyushu's largest pop culture event, Kitakyushu Pop Culture Festival, KPF for short, was held. Legendary voice actors took to the stage at the event’s talk shows, which attracted approximately 70,000 visitors over two days. This is the 8th time the event has been held since it started in 2014.

[Overview]

- Talk show featuring voice actors and creators
- Anime song live performances
- Exhibition of anime and manga works, local collaboration projects
- Experience corner (esports, digital illustrations, etc.)
- Cosplay events, etc.



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Kitakyushu City
Promotion Movie